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Czech president to visit Kingdom Saturday

AMMAN (J.T.) — Vaclav Havel and the first lady of the Czech Republic will be arriving in Amman Saturday at the invitatioo of His Majesty King Hussein and Queen Noor. Mr. Havel will be accompanied by an official delegatioo of ministers and business represeotatives that will hold talks with their Jordanian counterparts. The chamber of industry and commerce will be hosting the Czech trade delegatioo of 13 corporations headed by the Czech minister of trade and transport on Sunday.

Wagner killed in U.N. helicopter crash

SARAJEVO (AP) — German envoy Gerd Wagner, one of the most senior diplomats stationed in Bosnia, and at least 10 other people were killed Wedoesday wben their U.N. helicopter crashed in Mountain Terrain, diplomats said. Wagner, 55, was a deputy to Carlos Westendorp of Spain, the high representative to Bosnia in cbarge of trying to implemeot peace there. He was en route to negodations in Bugojno, some 95 kilometres oorthwest of Sarajevo, when his chopper came down in high terrain. The only survivors appeared to be the four-man crew, thought all to be Ukrainians, said a senior Western diplomat, insisting on anonymity. At least 10 more of the 16 passengers were killed, U.N. spokesman Liam McDowall said. Another was missing.

King bids Zeroual farewell after 'successful visit by all standards'

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday pledged Jordan's backing for the Algerian people and leadership in the face of the current circumstances facing their country, stressing that the Algerian people have the rigbt to live in peace.

Speaking to reporters upon bidding farewell to Algerian President Liamine Zeroual at the end of his three-day visit 10 Jordan, King Hussein reiterated Jordan's stand against acts of terrorism and against the atrocities committed against the Algerian people.

Describing the Algerian president's visit as extremely successful by all standards, King Hussein said that the two countries bold idenocal views adding that the talks in the past two days were characterised with frankness and beld in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

Referring to the accords concluded between the two couotries during Mr. Zeroual's visit, the King said that the two countries are determined to execute tbese agreements and to explore other scopes of bilateral cooperation.

His Majesty King Hussein and Algerian President Liamine Zeroual confer Wednesday before the departure of the president after a three-day visit to the Kingdom (Petra photo)

Io reply to a question about Jordan's aid to Algeria to deal with the preseot difficulties, the King said that "Jordan's stand is quite clear — we support the Algerian people and leadership and their right to live in tranquillity and peace on their oatiooal soil."

In answer to a question about eoding inter-Arab differeoces, the King said that "relations with the Arab sister states are oow back on track and we will do everythiog in our power to achieve further progress in this regard through bilateral contacts and pave the way for a comprehensive Arab meeting."

The King saluted the Algerian people wishing them stability, security and continued progress.

King Hussein had earlier in the day called on the Algerian president and resumed discussions with him about issues of common concern including bilateral cooperation and regional issues.

Seeing off the Algerian president at the airport were members of the Royal family, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Senate Speaker Zeid Rifai, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneb, Cabinet ministers, senior officials and high-ranking army officers.

Before Mr. Zeroual's departure, the Algerian minister of transport, Ahmad Bou Leil, beld a meeting with his Jordanian counterpart Bassam Saket to discuss the implementatioo of Jordanian-Algerian agreements on land and maritime transport wbich were signed earlier this year in Algeria.

The Algerian minister of higher education, Ammar Tow, along with his Jordanian counterpart Munther Masri called at Al al Bayt University in Mafraq and met University Vice Presideot for Educational Affairs Omar Shdeifat for discussion oo bilateral cooperation in higher education and scieotific research.

KING RECEIVES SAUDI MINISTER OF INFORMATION: His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday receives at the Royal Court Saudi Minister of Information Fouad Abdul Salam Farisi. Mr. Farisi conveyed to King Hussein greetings of Saudi King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz. Attending the meetings were Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi (Petra photo)

Crown Prince back home after Umra, talks with Saudi officials

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan returned home after a two-day official visit to Saudi Arabia. Prince Hassan beld talks with Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz, first deputy prime minister, oo the latest developmeots in the regioo as well as bilateral ties.

The two sides also discussed the peace process and called for a comprehensive peace in the region. The Crown Prince was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Rashed and senior officials.

At the end of his visit, the Crown Prince and the accompanying delegatioo performed the Umra (the lesser pilgrimage in Islam).

Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh stressed the importance of Jordanian-Saudi talks which took place Tuesday betweeo Prince Hassan and Prince Abdullah.

In a statement to Al Sharq Al Awsat newspaper, Dr. Tarawneh said Prince Hassan's talks with Saudi officials "are important since they come at a stage when the regioo faces sensitive and difficult conditions."

He added that during the talks, the two sides assessed the status quo io the Middle East as well as the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's visit.

"Jordanian and Saudi positions on the peace process and the outcome of Ms. Albright's visit to the region were identical."

PNA, settlers reject Netanyahu's compromise solution over east Jerusalem settlers problem

Combined agency dispatcbes

PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT Yasser Arafat warned Wednesday of a "very negative reaction" if Israel did not quickly obtain the removal of Jewish settlers occupying a house in an Arab quarter of Arab east Jerusalem.

Several hundred Palestinians clashed briefly with police when they tried to march on the house in the Ras Al Amoud neighbourhood, but the protesters were quickly dispersed.

"This is a clear breaching of what has been agreed upon," Mr. Arafat said of the move by three settler families inio the bouse in the Ras Al Amoud districi.

"We hope that this will be solved very quickly, otherwise there will be a very negative reacoon," he told reporters at his Gaza City headquarters.

Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu has a legal opiion to evict Jewish settlers on securiiy grounds from two Palestinian homes they took over in Arab easi Jerusalem, lawyers said Wednesday.

But such a move could draw fire from right-wing and religious parties in his fragile coalition.

Settlers who took over the two buildings in the Ras Al Amoud neighbourhood under cover of night on Sunday said the properties were bought by U.S. Jewish millionaire Irving Moscowitz.

A settler spokeswoman said the Miami-based magnate asked Israel's high court of justice Wednesday to issue a temporary order banning Mr. Netanyahu from evicting the settlers from property which he said he had legally bougbt and rented to them.

Palestinians dispute the ownership claim and have demanded the settlers be thrown out.

"Wbat Mr. Netanyahu can do legally to remove the settlers is a tough question," said an Israeli constitutional lawyer who asked not to be idenufied.

A Palestinian is dragged away by Israeli riot police from outside the new Jewish settlement in the Arab east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud Wednesday (Reuters photo)

Palestinian children on their way home from school Wednesday pass through a line of Israeli riot police who stand at the new Jewish settlement in east Jerusalem (Reuters photo)

"He could use a recommendation by former Attorney General Yosef Harish, who said that in cases in which there is a high probability of danger to public security the government could interfere with property rights," the attorney said.

"This quesoon bas never been examined and if it is applied it will probably be challenged," he told Reuters.

Public Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani has already gone on record as saying there is no immediate security risk because the national police force he oversees could maintain order at the settlement site.

The lawyer said the Israeli government could expropriate the property "for public use" under British mandatory law, which is still valid in Israel, and pay compensaoon to the owners. "It's a lengthy process though," be said.

Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled said the government proposed a compromise whereby the Jewish families would evacuate the buildings but leave behind a token presence. The idea was immediately rejected by settlers and Palestinians.

Under the deal, the 11 settlers would move out and be replaced by 10 Jewisb seminary students who would renovate the two buildings in the Ras Al Amoud neighbourhood in Arab east Jerusalem, the sector claimed by the Palesonians as a future capital.

However, the settlers rejected the emerging deal and Palestinians branded it a "deception."

"There is no compromise," settler spokeswoman Hagit Harel told reporters.

The speaker of the Palesonian parliament, Ahmad Qouriea, said the Palesonians would not accept any deal that left settlers in the two buildings. If the settlers stay, Mr. Qouriea said, "this will cause a very dangerous situation."

In a sign that the Palestinians were abandoning their inioal restraint, the Palestine Liberation Organisatioin (PLO) headquarters in Jerusalem announced that a protest in Ras Al Amoud was planned for Wednesday afternoon.

"The question is not whether he has the legal power to remove the settlers but whether he has the political will," said Palestinian attorney Jonathan Kuttab.

"In the name of security Israel does everything it wants, it violates international law, kidnaps people and invades countries," Mr. Kuttab said.

"He can remove them tomorrow, expropriate the land and build a police station. In the name of security, Israeli courts allow torture. If you can torture someone half to death, you can prevent someone from entering a house. This is all manoeuvring and the games he likes to play," Mr. Kuttab said.

Eytan Geva, one of Mr. Moscowitz's lawyers in Israel, said his client bought land at Ras Al Amoud in 1991 from Jewish religious institutions which he contended had owned it since 1880.

But Faisal Husseini, the Palestinian National Authority's representative in Jerusalem, said the land belonged to a Palestinian family.

"We have known for the past 70 years that this land has been under the control of the Al Ghoul family and it was never under the control of any Jew or Israeli," Mr. Husseini said at a sit-in at the site on Tuesday night.

"Eveo if it were true [that Moscowitz owns land] and they think that it is time for everyone to get the land registered in his name, then we should take our land in west Jerusalem. We own 70 per cent of the land there," Mr. Husseini said.

Jewish settlers throw stones, try to close Palestinian road

HEBRON (AFP) — Jewish settlers tried again to stop Palestinian workers carrying out U.S. sponsored renovations on a road outside their enclave in the West Bank town of Hebron on Wednesday, witnesses said.

Around 50 settlers, including women and children, stood in front of a bulldozer working on Shuhada street, while others threw stones and eggs at the Palestinian workers and journalists.

Israeli soldiers dispersed the crowd and detained one settler for throwing stones, but they later released him, witnesses said. No injuries were reported.

Work continued afterwards under a heavy guard of Israeli border police.

On Monday settlers blocked Shuhada street with 10 cars which Israeli police then towed away.

Settlers have frequently thrown stones and, on at least one occasion, shot at workers in a bid to stop renovation of Shuhada street, which runs past one of their enclaves.

The U.S. has contributed $1 million for the Palestinian municipality in Hebron to enlarge the street and improve its sewage and lighting, in order to reopen it to Palestinian vehicles. Israel closed the street, which connects central Hebron to the rest of the city.

Tarawneh to deliver Kingdom's address at 52nd U.N. General Assembly session

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh will travel to New York on Monday to attend the U.N. General Assembly's 52nd session and meet with a number of foreign ministers to outline Jordan's stand regarding the Middle East peace process.

Dr. Tarawneb said in a statement that he will deliver Jordan's address to the General Assembly dealing with the various problems facing the world in general and the Middle East region in particular noting that the address will cover the Palestine refugees question.

He said that Jordan's address aims to draw the world community's attention to the recurrent deficit in the annual budgets of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and demand that the world community shoulder its responsibility towards this issue.

In a statement publisbed by the Middle East newspaper Wednesday, Dr. Tarawneh described a recent trip to the Middle East by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as positive because it gave the secretary an opportunity to study the Palestinian situation and the suffering of the Palestinian people as a result of the Israeli closure of the self-rule areas and the Israeli government's current measures.

He said the trip was useful as it also allowed the U.S. secretary to learn about the efforts exerted by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) for reviving the peace process.

Dr. Tarawneh expressed belief that the U.S. administration will better understand the PNA's position in light of a report Ms. Albright will submit to President Clinton.

Referring to Ms. Albright's visit to Amman, Dr. Tarawneh said Jordan told the U.S. secretary that its stand was in conformity with the communiqué issued in Cairo recently following a summit meeting that grouped His Majesty King Hussein, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, ooting that the three countries demanded the implementation of the Oslo accords.

"We told Ms. Albright that the collecove punishment which Israelis apply against the Palestinians was against all laws stressing that the security issue is of importance but that it is only a part of a just and comprehensive peace," said Dr. Tarawneh.

Asked about the problem which bars the implementaoon of the Jordanian agreements, he said "we cannot say there are problems over the non-implementation of the agreements but rather we face some questions connected with the economic and trade agreements whicb Israel has so far failed to implement. But the general situation and the general psychological and political atmosphere are not convenient for speeding up the implementation of the trade agreement between the two countries."

Palestinians accuse Israel of killing prisoner

AJJA, West Bank (AFP) — The father of a Palestinian detainee who Israel said committed suicide in his cell accused Israeli authorities on Wednesday of killing his son in prison.

"The army murdered my son. I pray to God to get revenge on them," Hassan Maaleh, 70, told Agence France Presse from his village of Ajja in the northern West Bank.

The army said Tuesday that Mr. Maaleh's son Marwan, who had been arrested in the wake of a July 30 Jerusalem bombing, had hung himself in his cell in Megiddo prison in north Israel.

A spokesman for the Israeli internal security ministry said Wednesday they had no further details on the case, but noted that under Israeli law an autopsy and an investigation into the death was required.

Marwan had three children and his wife was pregnant with a fourth, Mr. Maaleh said. "He didn't belong to any political organisation, not the Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas] or anything," he said.

Marwan, who worked as a construction worker in Israel, was arrested amid sweeps a few days after the July bombing for which Hamas' military wing, the Izzeddine Al Qassam brigade claimed responsibility.

He was placed in administrative detention, in which Israel detains for indefinite periods suspects it considers a security threat but against whom it does not hold enough evidence to put on trial.

"This is a perfect example of the dangers of administrative detention, which Israel uses not as a preventative measure, but as a way to punish," said Bassem Eid, head of the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group.

Israel currently holds some 3,000 Palestinians in its prisons. Before the latest bomb attacks, at least 300 of them were in administrative detention, some for several years.

Israel arrests 17 suspects near Bethlehem

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — Israeli troops arrested 17 Palestinians suspected of belonging to Islamist groups in an overnight sweep on a village outside Bethlehem on Wednesday, witnesses said. The troops raided several houses in Teqoua village southeast of Bethlehem and rounded up 17 youths suspected of belonging to Hamas or Islamic Jihad, residents of the village said.

Egypt seizes Cairo edition of Al Hayat over disputed article

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian authorities Wednesday confiscated the Cairo edition of the London-based Arab daily Al Hayat over a report on Halaib, a disputed area claimed by both Egypt and Sudan, Al Hayat said.

"They confiscated the newspaper because of a news item we ran on the front page nn Halaib," a spokeswnman for Al Hayat's Editor-in-Chief Jihad Khazen said.

"The paper was stopped before it was printed," the spokeswoman told Agence France Presse from London.

Al Hayat's Cairo director, Wahid Abdul Majid, said the censorship board stopped publication of Wednesday's editinn "because it was opposed to a report on Halaib for national security reasons."

He said the censors felt that the article sent by their correspondent in Khartoum about a visit to Halaib by Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir was "slightly biased."

A copy of the article faxed from Al Hayat in London quoted political sources in Khartoum as saying that Gen. Bashir visited the Halaib border region as part of a "routine tour to parts of Sudan."

"This visit confirms Sudan's attachment to its sovereignty over its territories... and its attachment to self-restraint in the face of Egyptian harassment aimed at emptying Halaib of the Sudanese presence," they said.

"Bashir's visit to Halaih shows Sudan's determination to hold on to it although only 300 Sudanese troops are stationed there compared to an entire Egyptian unit and naval forces stationed in the region," they added.

The decades-long dispute between Egypt and Sudan flared up in 1992 with the two neighbouring countries claiming control over the 17,000-square-kilometre triangle skirting the Red Sea.

Egypt argues that its border with Sudan runs along the 22nd Parallel extending to the Red Sea, in line with an 1899 agreement between London and Cairo at the time of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium over Sudan.

But Khartoum maintains that the border runs northward in line with a 1902 decision which took into account the presence in the triangle of Sudanese ethnic groups.

Three Sudanese soldiers were killed in clashes between Egyptian and Sudanese forces in the Halaib area in June 1995.

Wednesday's seizure of Al Hayat in Egypt was the second of its kind in three years.

"One of our editions was also confiscated three years ago because of an article about [Islamist] violence," Mr. Majid said, adding that under Egyptian law censnrs go through articles before newspapers go to press.

Al Hayat is puhlished simultaneously in London and several Arab capitals, including Cairo where it prints 5,000 copies daily.

The bead of the press censorship board, Lutfi Abdul Qader, confirmed the confiscation order but said he was unable to provide any reason for the seizure.

"It was banned and that's all," Mr. Abdul Qader said.

Palestinian women and schoolgirls on Wednesday pass by a bus full of supporters for the Jewish settlers who occupied two houses in the Ras Al Amond neighbourhood of Arab east Jerusalem. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat warned of a 'very negative reaction' if Israel did not quickly ohtain the removal of Jewish settlers occupying two houses they purchased in the Arah neighbourhood (AFP photo)

As problems brew in Jerusalem, Israeli premier readies Central European tour

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — As the Israeli-Palestinian crisis brews at bome, Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu is scheduled Thursday to begin a three-nation tour to cement links with the Central European states of Austria, Hungary and Romania.

"This is a goodwill visit planned a long time ago," said Mr. Netanyahu's media advisor David Bar-Illan.

"The trip should lead to strengthening cooperation, especially economic, with these three nations with wbom we bave friendly relations," he said.

Israeli press reports Tuesday said Mr. Netanyahu considered cancelling the tour as tensions flared bere over the surprise occupation Sunday night by radical Jewish settlers of a home in the Arab east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud.

The reports said Mr. Netanyahu also feared new bombings by militants following two Jerusalem bombings in July and Sept. 4.

Palestinians warned that unless the government evicted the settlers from Ras Al Amoud their presence could spark widespread rioting like that which followed the opening of a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel near Muslim boly sites in Arab east Jerusalem.

The tunnel opening, almost exactly a year ago, sparked three days of rioting and armed clashes between Palestinian police and Israeli soldiers which left 85 people dead. The figbting erupted Sept. 27 as Mr. Netanyahu was on a European tour.

The prime minister was struggling Tuesday to convince the settlers to leave Ras Al Amoud peacefully and his office announced no changes to Mr. Netanyahu's travel plans.

He was scheduled to fly Thursday to Romania for talks with Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea and other officials on economic and military cooperation as well as the stalemated Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

The talks are also expected to touch on the conditions of tens of thousands of Romanian labourers in Israel after questions of possible mistreatment arose following the death of an elderly worker at a Tel Aviv construction site earlier this year.

In Budapest Friday to Sunday, Mr. Netanyahu will meet with President Arpad Goencz and Prime Minister Gyula Horn for talks again centred on economic links, officials said.

He is due to wind up the tour Monday and Tuesday in Austria, a rapidly budding trade partner for Israel.

Bilateral relations with Austria have improved markedly in recent years after tense ties with Chancellor Bruno Kreisky due to his government's support for the Palestinian cause in the 1970's and then under President Kurt Waldheim who bad hidden his Nazi past.

Rescuers rip open truck as 29 children drown in road accident in Egypt

MASEER, Egypt (AP) — Villagers used their bare hands to tear apart the wooden sides of a truck Tuesday as they pulled injured children from beneath the wreckage of a truck that overturned in a canal, killing 29 youth.

At least 54 children and teenagers were injured when the truck, whicb was hringing the youth to work in government-owned cotton fields, skidded off a narrow, unpaved road and plunged into a 2-metre-deep canal in Maseer village in Kafr Al Sheikh, 120 kilometres north of Cairo.

The victims were between 12 and 17 years old, police and doctors in Kafr Al Sheikh said. It is not unusual for children and teenagers to work in farm fields in Egypt. Children working in the fields earn about $1.25 a day, enough to support themselves and help their impoverished families.

Villagers said they heard the children crying out for help as the truck fell into the canal.

"The people were screaming and trapped inside the back of the truck," said Hamadah Ibrahim Sahsah, a village guard. "We started with our hare hands pulling off the wood and pulling the children out."

Annther village guard, Shehata Al Saudi, said: "We jumped into the canal and pulled from the side and from the top... and lifted the workers out alive and dead."

Ahmad Hammoud, an ambulance worker, said many of the survivors had hroken bones and their eyes and mouths were covered with mud.

Pink, green and blue dresses and long beige robes that are traditionally worn by village men and youth were seen floating down the canal hours after the accident.

The truck was travelling along a narrow, side road in Maseer when the driver lost control as he passed a section of the road that had been partially washed out by water from the canal, Mr. Hammoud said.

The truck tumbled into the canal pinning scores of children and teenagers beneath the wreckage.

Villagers jumped into the canal to try and save the children and were able to pull several from the truck.

Eleven boys and 18 girls drowned, said Abbas Sayed, head of the Kafr Al Sheikh hospital where the children were taken.

In Sul Hagar, 30 kilometres southeast of Maseer, hundreds of villagers sat quietly on the road leading to the village cemetery. Twenty-three of the dead were from that village.

Ambulances brought the bodies alone or in pairs to graves at half-hour intervals.

As the ambulances approach the village, women in hlack veils wailed, and men shouted "Allahu Akbar," Arabic for "God is great."

Mohammad Zaghloul stood among the tombstones of the cemetery weeping as an ambulance carrying his 13-year-old daughter Ahlam arrived. Ahlam would have started the 8th grade Saturday.

Mr. Zaghloul could not even look up as villagers carried Ahlam's body to ber grave.

Ahlam's uncle, Ahmad Abdul Rahman Al Bishy, demanded that the government compensate the families.

"Their families are very poor and the kids work here and there because their families are needy," be said.

Wednesday's editions of the Al Akhhar and Al Jumhouriyah newspapers quoted Prime Minister Kamal Janzouri as saying that the families of the dead would receive $900 while those of the wounded would receive $150.

The truck that overturned was owned by Egypt's agriculture ministry, the interior ministry said in a statement.

Mr. Sayed said that 56 children were injured, two of them suffering from brain haemorrhages.

Police earlier said 54 children were injured.

All of the injured children, except the two suffering brain injuries, have been released from the hospital, Mr. Sayed said.

Denktash cancels appointments because of illness

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash has cancelled all his appointments until Sunday because of a leg inflammation, his doctor, Sait Akin, announced Wednesday.

"President Rauf Denktash must rest because of a vein inflammation in his left leg," the Turkish news agency Anatolia quoted Mr. Akin as saying.

"An examination Tuesday showed that the healing was not at a satisfactory level ... his appointments for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday have been cancelled," Mr. Akin said.

Mr. Denktash heads the breakaway Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which declared independence in 1983 and is recognised only by Ankara, which has 35,000 troops stationed there.

Syria seeks cancellation or delay of Israel-Turkey-U.S. exercises

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syria asked Turkey Wednesday to cancel or delay naval manoeuvres it plans to hold in November in the eastern Mediterranean with Israel and the U.S.

"The manoeuvres come at a critical time and harm the security of the region and neighbourly relations," the official Al Thawra newspaper said. "But there is still time to stop or delay them until the situation in the region is clarified."

The manoeuvres, which have already been postponed once, were at the centre of talks Tuesday in Alexandria, Egypt, between Turkish President Suleyman Demirel and his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak.

"At the beginning the exercises were suspicious," Mr. Mubarak said at a joint news conference with Mr. Demirel. "But President Demirel reassured me that they will be limited to search and rescue."

"President Demirel told me that they are not aimed against any Arab country, and we thank him for that," Mr. Mubarak added.

Al Thawra said that "despite the Turkish justifications, the reality is something else because the military coordination and alliance with the Arabs' enemy (Israel) doesn't necessarily signal good intentions." Mr. Mubarak is scheduled to meet Syrian President Hafez Assad in Alexandria Thursday and the manoeuvres are expected to be discussed. The manoeuvres are also expected to be raised at an Arab League meeting Sept. 20.

Meanwhile, the Interfax News Agency in Moscow cited the Russian air force as saying that Russia will hold joint military exercises September 20-27 at a site in Russia with a Syrian air defence unit.

The manoeuvres will consist of firing missiles at aerial targets, Interfax said, adding that the Syrians, who use Russian S-200 anti-aircraft missiles, hope the manoeuvres will be held annually.

Another Syrian government newspaper, Tishrin, accused the Israeli government meanwhile of "laying the groundwork" for a group of Jewish settlers to move into a house in historically Arab east Jerusalem neighbourhood nf Ras Al Amoud over the weekend.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO

14:10 .....Ovide and the Gang
14:30 ....The New Fred and Barney;
15:00 America's Funniest People
15:30 .....He Shoots He Scores
16:30 .....Shingalana
17:00 .....French Programmes
19:00 .....News in French
19:15 .....French Progammes
19:30 .....News Headlines
19:35 .....Trivial Pursiut
20:00 .....Parenthood
20:30 Lois and Clark — Superman
21:10 .....Kung Fu
22:00 .....News in English
22:30 .....Feature Film
23:15 .....Step By Step
23:59 .....End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:58 .....Fajr
06:16.....(Sunrise) Duha
12:30.....Dhuhr
16:00 .....'Asr
18:43 .....Maghreb
20:01.....'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 5516245
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Coingregation Tel. 688404
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Normal summer weather cnnditinns will prevail during the weekend with winds northwesterly light to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 15/31
Aqaba 23/36
Deserts.....14/33
Jnrdan Valley 22/35

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 30, Aqaba 34 Humidity readings: Amman 45 per cent, Aqaba 36 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Hanna Mansour.....750197
Dr. Sa'id Tawfiq.....788285
Dr. Yousef Naser.....751144
Dr. Afif Shukri.....898863
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy.....637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276802
Al Quds pharmacy .....(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Ratif Atallah.....994424
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency ...199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, ...644281/6
Akileh Maternity, ...642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mussber Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, ...775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ...865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital .....(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital .....(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital .....(09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital .....(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital .....(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital .....(02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital .....(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are supplied on phone **08 (52700) or 08(53250).**

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:05 .....Sanaa (RJ)
09:45.....New Delhi
10:05 ..... Bombay (RJ)
10:05.....Dahrain, Riyadh (RJ)
10:20 .....Bahrain (RJ)
10:25 .....Beirut (RJ)
10:40 .....Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 .....Colombo (RJ)
15:25 .....Kuwait (RJ)
15:55 ..New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 .....London (RJ)
17:30.....Jeddah (add) (RJ)
18:55.....Doha (RJ)
19:10 .....Athens (RJ)
19:20 .....Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
21:05.....Moscow (RJ)
01:35 .....Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)

Other Flights
13:00 .....Riyadh (SV)
13:55 .....Doha (GF)
14:30 .....Al 'Arish (PF)
14:40 .....Shariqah (AH)
16:00 .....Rome (AZ)
19:50 .....Tel Aviv (LY)
21:00 .....Cairo (MS)
21:10 .....Beirut (ME)
01:20 ..Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
05:40 .....London (BA)
09:00 .....Dubai (EK)

Royal Wings (RW)
(For Thursday and Friday)
08:45 ..... Aqaba (RW)
10:05 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
10:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
18:20 .....Tel Aviv (RW)
19:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
22:20 .....Aqaba (RW)
23:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:45 .....Beirut (RJ)
09:10 .....Kuwait (RJ)
11:30.....Moscow (RJ)
12:10.....Aqaba, Paris (RJ)
12:15 ....Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:20 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:30.....Tunis, Casablana (RJ)
12:30.....Jeddah (add) (RJ)
13:00.....Doha (RJ)
13:20.....Athens (RJ)
13:25.....London (RJ)
17:10...Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
19:00...Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
21:20 .....Laranca (RJ)
21:25.....Jeddah (RJ)
22:00 .....Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:15.....Cairo (RJ)
23:59 ..... Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

Other Flights
04:00 .....Athens (OA)
06:15 .....Istanbul (TK)
08:45 ..... Beirut (ME)
08:50 .....Amsterdam (GA)
09:10 .....London (BA)
14:30..... Riyadh (SV)
14:45 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:30 Annaba (Algeria) (AH)
15:30 .....Al 'Arish (add) (PF)
17:00 .....Rome (AZ)
21:10 .....Tel Aviv (LY)
22:00 .....Cairo (MS)
02:30 .....Amsterdam (KL)
08:45 .....Beirut (ME)
10:00 .....Dubai (EK)
10:25 .....London (BA)

Royal Wings
(For Thursday and Friday)
07:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
09:15 .....Aqaba (RW)
10:30 .....Amman (QAIA) (RW)
17:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
18:55 .....Tel Aviv (RW)
21:30 .... Amman (QAIA) (RW)
22:50 .....Aqaba (RW)

Queen Noor meets with president of youth foundation, Finnish Red Cross

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor met Wednesday with Vice President of the International Youth Foundation (IYF) Par Stenback at the Jubilee School to discuss a plan to form a coalition for supporting youth projects in Jordan, a press release announced Wednesday.

Mr. Stenback, who is vice president of the Europe and the Middle East Office, said IYF and the Arab Council for Childhood and Development have sponsored studies on promoting children and youth development in Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, and Egypt. He added that the IYF will work in Jordan in cooperation with the National Task Force for Children, which is chaired by the Queen, the announcement continued.

IYF was established in 1990 after two years of consultation with leaders in business, philanthropy, education, government, and social services in more than 30 countries. IYF enlists a wide array of international organisations and leaders in its efforts to identify, fund, and expand pioneering projects for youth, the press release read.

In his capacity as President of the Finnish Red Cross, Mr. Stenback discussed with Queen Noor, who with His Majesty King Hussein is an honorary president of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society and is also the president of the United World Colleges (UWC), the progress of expanding cooperation between the Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the UWC. The UWC college in Norway has a pioneering partnership with the International Red Cross/Red Crescent, which has enabled most of its students to be selected from refugee camps, developing countries, and Central and Eastern Europe, the statement continued.

The United World Colleges (UWC) is an equal opportunity, international, secondary education programme designed to foster cross-cultural understanding and global peace. Founded in 1962, it consists of nine colleges situated in Wales, Canada, Singapore, the U.S., Swaziland, Italy, Venezuela, Hong Kong, and Norway, and will open a new college next November in India. The UWC students are chosen on merit regardless of race, creed, colour, background, or financial ability, and the majority are awarded scholarships, the statement added.

President of the Jordan Red Crescent and Vice President of the International Foundation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Muhammad Hadid attended the meeting with the Queen, the statement concluded.

Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday meets with the three Jubilee School students whose papers won honourable mention in an international science competition (Petra photo)

Queen Noor meets with Jubilee School international competition winners

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday met with Alia Alawneb, Maria Sbihadeb, and Rawan Abu Zeitoun, the three Jubilee School students whose papers on "The Magnificent Aurora," "The Shroedinger Wave Equation," and "The Uncertainty Relations," respectively, won "honourable mentions" at the fifth international competition "First Step to Nobel Prize in Physics," held by the Polish Academy of Sciences, according to a press release Wednesday.

The competition, which is open to all secondary school students under the age of 20, aims to provide young aspiring scientists "with an opportunity to compare their achievements with those of their colleagues from other countries," the statement continued.

Fifty-seven countries participated in this year's competition, with a total of 304 papers. Jordan, which was represented by the Jubilee School students, was the only Arab country to win, the statement added.

Later Queen Noor chaired a meeting of the Jubilee School Steering Committee, the press release continued.

Jordan, Saudi Arabia conclude memorandum on cooperation in media, information fields

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Saudi Arabia Wednesday concluded a memorandum of understanding paving the way for bilateral cooperation in media and information fields.

The memorandum provides for the promotion of bilateral ties in information and media and the conclusion of agreements on cooperation between the two countries' national news agencies, radio and television stations, and press and publications departments.

The memorandum, which was signed by Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi and his Saudi Arabian counterpart Fuad Abdul Salam Farisi, calls for the exchange of radio and television materials, expertise in information fields, and personnel training.

It also allows for the exchange of documentaries and publications, and consultation on legislation connected with press and information.

Dr. Farisi, who is visiting Jordan at the invitation of Dr. Mutawi, said his delegation came to Jordan with the intention of launching cooperation in the information fields to serve the Saudi and Jordanian people.

Earlier, Dr. Mutawi opened the Islamic Broadcasting Union Executive Council's twentieth meeting, which is being attended by delegates from 15 Arab and Islamic countries.

Dr. Mutawi underlined the need for Islamic broadcasting institutions to utilise modern technology in conveying Islam's true message to the world.

Noting that foreign media and Western news agencies have linked violence and acts of terrorism with Islam by using such terms as islamophobia and Islamic terrorism, the minister said radio and broadcasting stations in the Arab and Islamic World have a duty to remove this distorted image.

He said Prince Hassan has been spearheading efforts worldwide to present the true image of Islam through interfaith dialogues and various forums.

Islam continually fights all forms of terrorism, which is not connected to a particular faith or sect and occurs in all parts of the world, he added.

Dr. Farisi, who is representing Saudi Arabia at the two-day meeting, also addressed the session, along with Ihsan Ramzi, director general of the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation.

Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi and Saudi Minister Fuad Abdul Salam Farisi Wednesday sign a memorandum of understanding to develop ties in information fields (Petra photo)

Majali praises Jordanian-British ties

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday voiced Jordan's appreciation of the U.K.'s stand and its support for the Kingdom on the Middle East peace process, and expressed Jordan's satisfaction with the strong Jordanian-British relations in economic, trade, and tourist fields.

At a meeting with a delegation representing the British Labour Party, Dr. Majali outlined Jordan's position on the peace process and its pivotal role in urging the world community to help end the present stalemate and ensure the continuation of the negotiations.

He reviewed the government's plans to expand the role of the private sector to achieve a strong national economy, policy of privatising public institutions, and means of encouraging foreign investments in the country.

He called on the delegation to encourage British investors to consider Jordan, pointing out that a number of projects have been implemented through British investment.

Both parties reviewed the general situation in the region and the obstacles facing the peace negotiations.

Ernie Ross, the head of the visiting delegation, said the British government and the British Labour Party were interested in Jordan's endeavours and views concerning regional and international issues, particularly the peace process.

He called for further aid to Jordan to help the national economy deal with the challenges of the future.

Mr. Ross lauded the British-Jordanian relations and voiced his party's readiness to back Jordan's efforts in the peace process.

The delegation's visit was arranged in coordination with the Arab Ambassadors Council in the U.K.

Dr. Majali also Wednesday met with Under-Secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry Onur Oymen, who arrived in Amman Tuesday, and reviewed Turkish-Jordanian relations, primarily in economic and trade fields, as well as water issues and the present Middle East situation.

Underlining the strong bilateral ties, Dr. Majali paid tribute to Turkey's role in many regional and international arenas and called for further development of relations.

Mr. Oymen, who left Amman Wednesday, said Turkey regards Jordan as a sister country that is playing a pivotal role in the peace process.

Both meetings were attended by Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani.

Pro-government party to release ticket, platform 'next week' — statement

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's pro-government political party, possibly the only large institutionalised group that will participate in the Nov. 4 elections, is to announce its ticket and political platform "at the beginning of next week," according to a National Constitutional Party (NCP) announcement Wednesday.

An executive committee meeting held Tuesday morning did not produce the final documents, but the NCP may publish a candidate list and programme as early as Saturday, NCP Secretary General Abdul Hadi Majali said.

Though Mr. Majali would not give the number of candidates his party will field in the Kingdom's 21 electoral districts, Arabic press reports have suggested that the NCP could field up to 60 candidates for the 80-seat Lower House.

Meanwhile, some NCP leaders, including Mr. Majali, have already won the support of their tribes and have been nominated by their family councils to run in the upcoming elections.

As for its platform, the NCP is expected to focus on its cornerstones of national unity and economic reforms.

According to Anis Muasher, NCP deputy secretary general for economic and financial affairs, the party's plan to "revitalise" Jordan's economy would be based on encouraging the key sectors of trade and tourism, as well as fighting unemployment, attracting the local labour force to those jobs traditionally reserved for guest workers, and replacing custom duties with value added taxes (VAT).

Formed from the merger of one large (Al Ahd) and eight smaller centrist parties, the NCP is expected to benefit from the withdrawal from the electoral race of the major opposition forces, including the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), smaller leftist and pan-Arab parties, and the professional associations, as well as prominent independent opposition leaders.

These groups announced in July their decision to boycott the elections in protest against the one-person, one-vote system, which they deem as encouraging tribalism at the expense of political parties' representation in Parliament, the normalisation of ties with Israel, and controversial amendments introduced in mid-May to the Press and Publication Law, as well as what they described as "a general limitation of public freedoms."

Women's conference ends with adoption of demands for parliamentary elections

By Rana Husseini
Jordan Times Staff reporter

AMMAN — Approximately 120 grass-roots women activists Tuesday voted for the ten most important demands out of 26 listings for the Parliamentary election period covering 1997-2001 at the conclusion of the two-day Convention on Jordanian Women's Demands for the Upcoming Parliamentary Elections.

These demands include: amending the Civil Status Law (63.3%), amending the Health Insurance Law (62 %), issuing a child protection law (57 %), amending the nationality law (57 %), issuing a law protecting women from domestic abuse (51.9 %), establishing a quota for women in Parliament (50.6 %), developing schools' curricula (48.1 %), modifying the election law (46.8 %), entitling women to a passport without the approval of a male guardian (43 %), and achieving equality at the professional level (41.8 %).

The last item on the agenda, number 26, concerning the cancellation of the law that reduces the penalty for crimes of honour, received only 17.7 per cent.

The 26 demands on the women's agenda were the culmination of four separate agendas focusing on the political, economic, social, educational, health, and environmental demands of women living in the Aqaba, Irbid, Mafraq, and Zarqa governorates.

Director of Al Kutba Institute for Human Development Ellen Khouri told the gathering that her institute, along with the two other organisers, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the General Federation of Jordanian Women, will support the agenda and try to fulfil women's demands.

Earlier in the day, Jordan Times editor Ramzi Khouri presented a paper on building lobbies and pressure groups, in which he stressed the importance of powerful lobbying that "strategically works for the cause of women in the long-run."

"Lobbying should be comprised, backed, and supported by women's organisations that exist, and at the same time women should confront the candidates with their concerns and agendas," Mr. Khouri told the gathering.

Mr. Khouri also suggested that women activists ensure that candidates will adopt and be committed to their concerns, "and once these candidates win, the lobbying groups should follow up on their performances and commitments to the women's cause."

Khadijeh Habashneh Abu Ali of the Women's Studies Centre echoed Mr. Khouri's suggestion and added that in order to accomplish these goals, "we should form follow-up committees for the women's agenda to work as pressure groups within the governorates."

Further, Ms. Abu Ali asserted that these committees will meet, set priorities for the women in the governorates, and contact decision-makers to explain their demands.

President of the Arab Women Organisation Emily Nafa and former Minster of Justice Hisham Tel presented two papers tackling the penal code and laws that discriminate against women, stating that "both women's organisation and activists have an important responsibility to tackle this discrimination on the local level."

Conference to promote interaction between health, social science professionals opens today

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In order to promote the interaction of professionals in the social sciences and health spheres, the Family Health Group (FHG) has organised the Second Conference on the Arab Forum for Social Sciences and Health starting today.

FHG Director Ra'eda Qutob told the Jordan Times that the group found it important to encourage contact and integration of people working in these two fields, since they often work in isolation.

The goal of the conference, Dr. Qutob said, is to foster means of tackling health issues in a comprehensive manner, since "people usually think of a health problem in terms of its physical impact, and not its social, political, economic, and legislative aspects."

It was crucial to understand the environment in which the health problem arises, particularly the economic and political systems, according to the director.

"Only then can we say we have understood the health problem and can look for ways of preventing or curing the illness," she explained.

This year, the conference follows the theme of health and development.

"When the physical well-being of the individual is not as it should be, then this is reflected in economic and social terms, and vice versa," she said.

During this three-day conference, 48 papers from nine Arab countries will be presented on various themes, including women and children, adolescence, health policies, and the homeless.

Some specific topics include violence against women in a rural Egyptian community, the attitude of Lebanese doctors in disclosing cancer diagnosis to their patients, child abuse, and the phenomenon of adolescent suicide.

Dr. Qutob said she hoped that this conference will generate a pressure group to lobby for needed amendments or changes in the social science and health areas.

The conference has the goal of setting the internal by-laws of the Arab forum and to elect the secretary general, the executive committee, and the venue for the forum, she concluded.

WHAT'S GOING ON

CONCERT

* Concert entitled "A Night of Fayrouz Songs" by singer Serene Alloush at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

FILMS

* "Cro'nica del Alba" (ep. III) at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
* "Boys on the Side" at the American Centre, Abdoun, on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Syrian artist Dr. Fateh Moudarres at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until Sept. 25 (Tel. 5537598).
* Exhibition of photographs about the life of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman until Sept. 23.
* Works by Darleen Wilkerson entitled "Arab Madinas in Batik" at the Jordan Crafts Development Centre (Al Aydi), Jabal Amman, Second Circle, until Sept. 25 (Tel. 6445551).
* Fourth Pottery Exhibition by Mahmoud Sadiq and Da'ad Al Mufleh at Hamurabi Gallery, Gardens Street, until Sept. 19 (Tel. 5536098).
* Paintings exhibition entitled "La Radioactivite" at the French Cultural Centre, until Sept. 30.
* Paintings by Palestinian artists entitled "Palestine the Reality and the Dream" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 2 (except Tuesdays).

BIG SALE

A special collection of

OLD RUGS & KILIMS

The Heritage House is exhibiting 96 pieces of old rugs and kilims representing original flatweaving work of various bedouin tribes, Kurdish communities in Turkey and the Arab World. Twenty-one additional pieces come from Nomad Belushi, Persian and Afghani origins.

JORDAN INTER.CONTINENTAL HOTEL
FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY
19.9.97-20.9.97-21.9.97
9:00 A.M.-6:00 P.M.

Zum Tag der Deutschen Einheit
lädt die Deutsche Botschaft alle
in Jordanien
lebende deutsche Staatsangehörige zu
einem Empfang ein

Samstag, 04. Oktober 1997,
18:30-20:30 Uhr,
im Hotel Inter-Continental, Amman

Zum Einlaß berechtigende
Einladungskarten können
vorab bei der Botschaft abgeholt werden

5 Iranian technicians killed by gunmen in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (R) — Gunmen sbot dead five Iranian Air Force technicians and wounded a sixth in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi Wednesday, security sources said.

The wounded man had been taken to bospital and was only slightly burt, the sources said.

They said the Iranians had been on their way from the Kamra Aeronautical Complex, 70 kilometres west of Rawalpindi, to the army's Qasim Air Base in the city in a passenger van.

The Iranians were part of a 21-man group on a training course sponsored by the Defence Ministry and based at a military facility in Wah, about 30 kilometres west of Islamabad. They oormally worked at the Kamra Complex, the sources said.

Police had earlier identified the Iranians as trainee pilots and said they bad been in uniform when attacked at about seven a.m. by three men riding ooe motorcycle.

The unidentified assailants, wbo used Kalashnikov assault rifles in the attack, escaped on their motorcycle.

Police had earlier reported the incideot as an armed robbery targeting a bank van carrying cash.

The motive for the attack on the Iranians was not immediately clear.

In February, Sunni Muslim gunmen attacked the Iranian Cultural Centre in the city of Multan, in the central province of Punjab, killing its Iranian director, Mobammad Ali Rahimi, and seven local staffers.

Police blamed that attack on the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi group, an armed off-sboot of the fiercely anti-Shiite Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) organisation.

In January, SSP supporters burned the Iranian Cultural Centre in Lahore, one day after a bomb blast there killed SSP leader Zia-Ur-Rahman Faruqi and 22 other people.

SSP followers blamed Shiite militants for the bombing. SSP deputy leader Azam Tariq was among 55 wounded.

Shiite-majority Iran has in the past urged Pakistan to protect Shiites from attacks by what it calls terrorists.

Iran and Pakistan have extensive trade relations and are partners in the Ecoomic Cooperation Organisation, but their relations have been strained by differences over Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government, under pressure to halt a wave of Sunni-Shiite sectarian violence, passed a stringent new anti-terrorism law in August, giving police new powers and setting up special fast-track courts.

Afghan Taleban gain Saudi backing, aid

KABUL (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia has pledged to aid the hardline Afghan Talehan's quest for international acceptance and provide assistance to areas under their cootrol, a top militia official said Wednesday.

During a visit this mooth to meet King Fahd, a top militia delegation solicited political and financial help from the Arab backers of the strict Muslim movement, the official said.

"They were all positive. King Fahd was too kind, and they have all promised us as much as they can give us," said an enthusiastic Sher Mohammad Stanekzai, the militia's deputy foreign minister.

He said the delegatioo, led by Taleban number-two Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, requested belp in gaining the Afghan seat at the United Nations and the Organisatioo of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Mr. Stanekzai said the nine-day visit including meetings with King Fahd, Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abel Aziz and Prince Sultan Ben Abdel Aziz, the minister of defence and civil aviation.

"They promised they will order their minister of foreign affairs to use authority in order that the OIC and U.N. seat will be given to us," he said.

The Afghan seat at the OIC remains vacant, whilst the U.N. seat remains held by the Kabul government ousted by the militia in September last year.

Only Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia have officially recognised the Taleban, wbo control around two-thirds of Afghanistan including the capital Kabul.

Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are accused of being major backers of the militia, who in turn claim Russia, Iran, Tajikistan, France and India are backing their northern-based opponents.

"Nothing in particular has been signed from Saudi Arabia, but they promised us that they will do everything they can to help us," the deputy minister said.

He said bumanitarian aid including clothing, medicine and food has beeo offered to belp civilians in Taleban areas survive the looming winter, and loog term development aid had also been promised.

A delegation from the Saudi Arabian Islamic Bank was also set to visit Afghanistan, be said, to assess the possibility of repairing electricity supplies, roads and dams.

Mr. Stanekzai only mentioned a broad figure of $100 to $200 millioo of Saudi casb for the projects.

But Mr. Stanekzai maintained the aid was not aimed at eventually substituting the colossal amouots of Western cash that poured into Afghanistan, gripped by civil war for oearly 18 years.

"Those aid agencies already active are helping our people, hut they can not fulfil our requirements one hundred per cent, so we require help from friendly countries like Saudi Arabia," Mr. Stanekzai asserted.

Relations betweeo foreign aid groups and the militia have deteriorated over the past year, following tight restrictions on distributing assistance to women and the employmeot of female staff.

Meanwhile, The United Nations appealed Tuesday to Afghan factions in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sherif to allpw the evacuation of U.N. and private relief workers there.

"Thirteeo U.N. international staff members and a large oumber of NGO (non-governmental organisation) employees are stuck in Mazar," the chief of the U.N. mission to Afghanistan, Norbert Holl, said in a statement.

He said the relief workers were "unable to carry out vital bumanitarian assistance work because their offices have been looted of equipment and supplies."

The German U.N. official said "many of these people have been seriously harassed over the past week and the U.N. is anxious to remove them from the city at the earliest opportunity."

Cooditions in the city have deteriorated since the Taleban rellgious army, whicb controls most of the country, approached Mazar-e-Sherif before being driven back.

Opposition factions fought among themselves, U.N. officials said, with gunmen looting foreign aid agencies and diplomatic missions.

Senate confirms Shelton to head Joint Chiefs

WASHINGTON (R) — The Senate Tuesday unanimously confirmed army Gen. Henry Shelton to become chairman of the U.S. military Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

Gen. Shelton, a tough 55-year-old Green Beret paratrooper who led U.S. forces in Haiti, replaces Gen. John Shalikashvili as JCS chairman. He will be the third army general in a row to fill a job that traditiooally has rotated among army, navy and air force officers.

The Senate approved Geo. Shelton oo a voice vote without dissent. Gen. Sbelton is now bead of the U.S. Special Operations Command based in Tampa, Florida, and will serve a two-year term. Gen. Shalikasbvili is to retire until the eod of this mooth.

At his nominatioo hearing before the Senate Armed Servcies Committee earlier this month, Gen. Sbelton said he supported President Bill Clintoo's plan to remove troops from Bosnia in mid-1998. However, committee members expressed concern about the lack of an explicit strategy for removing U.S. military peacekeepers from the troubled country.

He woo a unanimous recommendation of approval from the committee wbose members said they were impressed with his promises focus on the welfare of troops and his support for efforts to modernise U.S. weaponry for the 21st century.

Gen. Sbeltoo's nomination in July came after U.S. Air Force Gen. Josepb Ralstoo, vice chairman of the joint chiefs, withdrew from the running due to revelations be bad an adulterous affair in the past.

Weather hampers search for U.S., German planes

WINDHOEK (R) — A U.S. team scouring the South Atlantic for further signs of two military planes believed to have collided off the African coast ended a night searcb after six hours Wednesday with little to report.

"The overall result was not as good as we anticipated." U.S. Air Force Colonel Dennis Barnett told reporters in the Namibian capital of Windhoek.

Dense fog, winds and choppy seas bampered the overnight search hy the crew of a U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules using night vision goggles and infra-red equipment.

Col. Barnett said a U.S. team of investigators was en route to Namibia to help.

The U.S. was also considering bringing in deep-sea salvage equipmeot to look for the flight recorder of the downed U.S. Starlifter in waters estimated at between 800 and 2,000 metres deep, he said.

"We will cootinue looking for it. There is a possibility of finding it and we are hopeful," Col. Barnett said.

Officials said the German Air Force Tupolev 154 had three flight recorders on board, of which two were data collectors and the other a voice recorder.

Hopes of finding survivors were fading as the searcb entered its fourth day but rescue officials said they would continue through the day.

Another night search would be mounted Wednesday night, with officials hoping to bring in an Orioo aircraft which can cope with had weather.

German Air Transport Command Chief General Gerbard Back told reporters any decision to call off the search operation would be taken by Washingtoo and Bonn but said that at the moment there was oo consideration of giving it up.

Six search planes were expected to be used during the day with assistance from a French frigate, the Floreal.

The first debris spotted at the site where the freak accident is thought to have occurred is being transported by ship and is due to reach the port of Walvis Bay by late Wednesday nigbt or early Thursday morning for inspection.

Only one body — believed to be one of the three womeo on board the German plane — has beeo recovered so far. The body was expected to be identified later Wednesday.

The remaining 32 people oo board the two planes are still missing.

The giant U.S. Starlifter was returning with its crew of nine to a base on Ascension Island in the South Atlantic after dropping off mine-removal trainers and equipment in Namibia.

The German plane carrying 24 people was on its way to a naval regatta in Cape Town and apparently entered the suspected collision area about the same time as the Starlifter.

Crashes spoil improving U.S. air accident record

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Two F-16 fighter jets collided off the New Jersey coast, in the fifth accident involving U.S. military aircraft in four days, an "accident too many" spoiling the country's steadily improving military crash record.

"One accident is one accident too many," Peotagoo spokesman Kenneth Bacon said Tuesday, promising that all the recent crashes would be thoroughly investigated.

The Air Force's fleet of F-117 Stealth fighters remained grounded after a spectacular air show crash over the weekend but the Pentagon said there were no plans for a broader safety standown.

The latest accident occurred late Tuesday when two Air National Guard F-16 fighter jets on a routing night training mission collided 48 kilometres southeast of Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The pilot of one aircraft managed to fly his damaged F-16 back to his base near Atlantic City, while the two pilots of the other plane ejected and were picked up by the Coast Guard. They suffered only minor injuries.

The accident occurred over one of the busiest air corridors in the United States where a high oumber of near misses have been reported, as air traffic cootrollers are ofteo overwhelmed by the sheer volume of traffic.

On Monday, a U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18D Hornet weot down off the North Carolina coast killing its pilot and a weapons officer during a training mission.

That followed a $45 million F-117 Stealth fighter that lost a chunk of its wing and plummeted into a residential neighbourhood Sunday during an airsbow near Baltimore, Maryland. The pilot ejected to safety and four people on the ground were injured.

Experts from manufacturer Lockheed Martin and the air force are still trying to figure out what bappened, and are keeping the remaining 53 Stealth fighters on the ground as a precaution.

The plane that crashed was built in 1981 and was one of the first Stealth fighters to enter service, Mr. Bacon said.

The topmost floor of a seven-storey office block comes crashing down as the search for survivors continued Wednesday. Seven people were killed and 13 are still believed to be trapped beneath piles of concrete and metal after the top three floors of the Bombay building caved in Tuesday (Reuter photo)

7 die, 13 trapped in India office collapse

BOMBAY (R) — Thirteeo people remained trapped beneath piles of concrete and metal a day after an office block collapsed in Bombay, killing at least seveo people, officials said Wednesday.

Workers used pickaxes and blowtorches in a race to free them from the ruins of the unstable seveo-storey office block in the Worli district of India's commercial capital.

Another 35 people were injured when the rear sectioo of the top three floors of the huilding caved in Tuesday, authorities said.

"We estimate there are still 13 people trapped," a senior fire brigade official said. "But the chances of anybody being alive are becoming less," he added.

"We think there are four customers trapped in the basement," said an official of the Standard Chartered Bank, which had safe deposit vaults in the building's basemeot.

Tumhling debris from the upper floors have blocked exits from the basement.

A Standard Charter employee died in the crasb, as well as a member of the security ageocy that guarded the branch, be added.

Search teams were hampered by falling masonry as the fragile block sbook, officials said.

Labourer Laxman Kekade was pulled from under a pile of rubble, badly injured but still alive. Mr. Kekade could only groan weakly as be was put into an ambulance and taken to bospital.

Weeping relatives stood in pouring rain amid piles of rubble, hoping for news. Some were too oumb to speak.

"I'm looking for my daughter. I've been waiting here since I beard the news and still they baveo't found ber," an elderly woman said, wiping away tears.

Many neigbbouring buildings were evacuated and stood empty.

Searchers said they had uncovered a corpse in the debris. "He was squashed beneath a cupboard. All the files in it had spilled out and covered him," a witness said.

Police officials said most of the 35 survivors rescued so far had only minor injuries.

Many of the building's occupants said they escaped because the structure started rumbling and shaking a few minutes before it collapsed, while many others were out at luncb.

"It's too early to say specifically what the cause (of the collapse) was," a fire brigade official said. "That will take some time."

Civic officials said the seafroot office block was huilt in 1976. They attributed the collapse to the gradual corrosion of the structure by waves, winds and torreotial rain during the moosooo seasoo.

But state governmeot officials Tuesday said they suspected oeglect could be the reason, and set up an investigating panel.

Riots continue for third day in Indonesian city

JAKARTA (AFP) — A third day of anti-Chinese disturbances erupted Wednesday in the Indonesian city of Ujungpandang, where at least six people have died, residents said.

All sbops and schools in the South Sulawesi provincial capital were closed because of the troubles, the latest in a series to hit Indonesia.

"Mobs are still pelting bouses and sbops, and witnesses said that at least one shop was torched this morning," a resideot told AFP by telephooe.

The resident said the attacks were "not as bad as Tuesday," but that sbops and schools bad remained closed and police and troops were patrolling streets.

An Ujungpandang police officer told AFP by telepbooe that two firemen were found dead in the rubble of a razed building Tuesday night, while another charred body was found Wednesday in a gutted pub.

The riots erupted Monday night after a nine-year-old girl was hacked to death by an ethnic Chinese man believed to be mentally disturbed.

More than 1,000 people raged through the city, pelting, looting and burning homes, shops and vehicles mainly in the areas where the ethnic Chinese reside.

Major General Agum Gumelar of the Wirabuana Military Command, wbose area of jurisdiction includes Ujungpandang, said 79 people had been detained following the riots.

An employee at a local bospital Tuesday said 28 ethnic Chinese bad been treated for injuries from the riots. Ujungpandang police said more than 400 buildings and 100 cars were damaged, including a temple, the Jakarta Post reported.

The nine-year-old girl, identified by the Ujungpandang daily Fajar as Anni Mujahidah, was killed in an attack allegedly by a 23-year-old ethnic Chinese man. A woman who was looking after the girl was fatally injured in the attack, dying in hospital, Mr. Gumelar told the private RCTI Television station.

Mr. Gumelar was quoted by the Fajar daily as saying the ethnic Chinese man died after he was attacked by people who saw the assault on Mujahidah.

Another resident told AFP that a 10:00 p.m. curfew was imposed on Tuesday and that security forces fired warning shots in the air and sbouted orders by megaphone for residents to stay indoors.

The riot was the latest in a series of ethnic disturbances to rock Indonesia in the past year.

Most have involved Muslims attacking Christian and ethnic Chinese targets. Ethnic Chinese make up less than four per cent of the population, but are believed to control more than 80 per cent of Indonesia's wealth.

Ujungpandang was the scene of riots in April last year when around 10,000 students opposed an increase in public transport fares. The Legal Aid Institute, a non-government organisation, claimed six youths died during five days of protests. The military said three died.

Indian oil refinery toll reaches 51; more bodies feared trapped

NEW DELHI (AFP) — An Indian minister has ruled out sabotage as the cause of an inferno in a three-day oil refinery as the death toll in the disaster climbed to 51 Wednesday.

Rescuers warned more bodies could be buried at the burnt out refinery complex in the southern port of Visakhapatnam, news agencies said.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) said the fatalities the fire, whicb broke out Sunday following an explosion in the state-run refinery, had risen to 51 following the discovery of another body.

"It is feared that over 20 bodies might still be trapped underneath the wreckage," PTI reported. A refinery spokesman told PTI: "We bope to complete the debris clearance operatioo (Wednesday)."

Indian Petroleum Minister Janeshwar Mishra said investigators had reported the fire was not due to sabotage.

He also promised after visiting the disaster site that the governmeot would review "safety norms of refineries throughout the country."

The refinery is owned by the Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd. (HPCL). The firm initially suggested sabotage could be behind the inferno, whicb forced about 150,000 local residents to flee. The HPCL said it suspected sabotage.

The company said Wednesday about 170 people were working at the time of the fire.

They included part-time employees wbose names were oot available with the company.

The refinery had sbut down operations for its aoual mainteoance when the disaster struck.

PTI said a HPCL canteen appeared to be have become a death trap following the blaze.

"We can see at least three bodies under the rubble at the canteen," Visakhapatoam Police Commissioner R.P. Meena told PTI. Rescuers used cranes to lift the tonnes of debris.

The cost of the fire has been estimated at around $400 millioo. The company says 11 storage tanks, with 27,000 tonnes of petroleum products, were lost.

Six building in the sprawling HPCL complex were also destroyed, while nearby buildings, including a oaval base and a dockyard, were also damaged.

Meanwhile, India's main opposition party Wednesday blamed "criminal negligence" for the fire and accused the federal government of trying to stage a cover-up.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) urged New Delhi to file criminal cases against officials of the refinery and also demanded a judicial inquiry.

PTI quoted Mr. Khurana as saying in Visakhapatnam that HPCL executives bad betrayed a "callous disregard" for safety standards.

"We want a judicial investigation," he said. "The earlier inquiry ordered by the government will only cover up the failures of the HPCL management."

Mr. Khurana said the refinery failed to initiate adequate safety measures after a fire in November left three people dead.

"We should learn lessons from the bitter experience of the Bhopal tragedy," Mr. Khurana said, referring to a massive gas leak from a Union Carbide pesticide plant in 1984 that killed 7,000 people.

Indian oil refinery toll reaches 51; more bodies feared trapped

Mir's orientation system is back on line

MOSCOW (AP) — The Mir's orientation system was back on line Wednesday, keeping the station pointed toward the sun and recharging solar batteries that were drained during the most recent computer breakdown, officials said.

Lights were switched back on in most of the station, which had been using only limited light for more than two days as the crew tried to save energy while assembling a replacement computer.

The crew was expected to reconnect the electricity supply to the Priroda module, which had been cut off from power since a space collision in June, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported, citing mission control officials.

The June collision with a cargo ship badly damaged the Mir's Spektr module, which has been sealed off. But it also caused energy problems for the Priroda module, one of six modules that make up the Mir.

The computer crash Sunday — the fourth in two months — posed no danger for the Russian-American crew, which was able to keep essential functions operating. But the breakdown added to the doubts about the 11-year-old station's safety.

Critics say that the station, which had been designed to last only five years, has become unsafe and should be abandoned. But Russian officials, insisting that the problems are well under control, want to keep the Mir operating at least until the international space station is put in orbit, a mission set to start next year.

The international station, which involves contributions by the Americans, European nations, the Japanese and the Russians, has been delayed because Russia has fallen behind schedule due to money problems.

An official with the Russian Space Agency — which controls the construction of Russia's share of the station — said Wednesday the project may be delayed again if the Russian government does not pay the money it owes to the agency.

The space agency still hasn't received the 700 billion rubles ($120 million) that the government was to send by July, Aleksei Krasnov, the deputy chief of the agency's international cooperation department, told ITAR-TASS.

"We have already exhausted our credit of trust from foreign partners, so the schedule of the (international station) construction must not be revised any more," Mr. Krasnov said, adding that he hoped the funds would come through this month.

On the Mir, the crew was checking the remaining systems that were still down after the computer crash, mission control spokesman, Valery Lyndin was quoted by ITAR-TASS as saying.

After several days filled with repair work, the Russian cosmonauts were able to resume scientific experiments Wednesday, the Interfax news agency reported.

NASA astronaut, Michael Foale was to continue working on his greenhouse and to pack equipment he will take back to earth when he returns home on the U.S. space shuttle Atlantis.

The shuttle is set to blast off Sept. 25 for a docking with the Mir. The shuttle will bring Mr. Foale's replacement, David Wolf.

CANINE RESCUED: A rescue worker holds a dog after it was rescued from a house destroyed by a landslide, triggered by torrential rains in Kagoshima after typhoon Oliwa hit Kyushu. The powerful typhoon stormed through the southern Japanese island of Kyushu on Tuesday killing at least six people and forcing tens of thousands to flee their homes (Reuter photo)

OSCE presses ahead with count for hotly contested Bosnia polls

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Bosnia's election supervisors, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), pressed ahead Wednesday with tallying ballots from the republic's hotly contested weekend local polls.

A second central counting centre for the tens of thousands of votes cast by Bosnia's Serbs, Muslims and Croats was to start operation Wednesday in the Serb-held Sarajevo district of Lukavica, an OSCE spokeswoman said.

"There are a few postal ballots still to come in, but everything appears to be going very smoothly," OSCE spokeswoman Betty Dawson said.

To enable refugees living abroad to vote in the crucial election which is intended to pave the way for their return to their pre-war homes, some 400,000 voters abroad were registered to cast their ballots by mail.

Political parties have already issued some results, but the counting currently underway in two special centres in Sarajevo of the absentee votes could still influence the final outcome.

The count comes amid continuing controversy over a decision by OSCE Bosnia mission chief, Robert Frowick, to overrule a judgement by an election legal body to punish the main Serb party for its links to indicted war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic.

OSCE sources said members of the Election Appeals Sub-Commission (EASC) headed by a Norwegian judge and including other international legal experts were considering resigning over Mr. Frowick's decision.

The sources added that the four-member legal team would meet Mr. Frowick Wednesday morning to discuss the issue.

On Monday the watchdog had issued a toughly-worded ruling excluding SDS candidates in Pale from the Saturday-Sunday vote.

"The EASC will not turn a blind eye to the continuing and increasingly transparent role played by Radovan Karadzic in the affairs of the SDS," it said.

Mr. Frowick's decision was also condemned by an independent group monitoring the Bosnia peace process, which said it showed lack of Western resolve to enforce the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the Bosnian war.

"If we will make concessions and forget the Dayton provisions everytime they threaten violence, why the hell are we here?" said Hrair Balian, head of the International Crisis Group, a U.S.-based organisation.

But an OSCE spokesman justified Mr. Frowick's ruling, saying security concerns and the peace process were paramount.

"Ambassador Frowick felt that with the extraordinary challenges ahead in implementing the results of the elections, the effects of the decision would have greatly undermined the OSCE's ability to implement the elections results," OSCE spokesman David Foley said.

He added that while Mr. Karadzic — twice indicted by The Hague-based war crimes tribunal for his role in wartime atrocities — continues to wield influence in Bosnia, the OSCE "has done all that it can do" about him.

Last weekend's two-day polls, the results of which are expected Saturday, are considered a key part of the 1995 accords.

The polls are intended to establish new-style local government in Bosnia's two halves — the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska — and pave the way for the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees displaced during the 43-month war.

Azerbaijan accuses Armenia of having nuclear weapons

TASHKENT (AFP) — Azerbaijan Tuesday accused Armenia of receiving deliveries of nuclear warheads and of developing a nuclear weapons programme, at an international conference here.

"Azerbaijan is very worried about Armenia's policy in the field of nuclear arms," Azeri Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov said.

"Even if Armenia is not on the list of countries capable of possessing nuclear weapons, we have proof of Armenia's intention of possessing nuclear weapons," he continued.

"The weapons which Armenia has recently received include nuclear warheads," the minister said without specifying where the arms came from.

He said Armenia was developing its nuclear weapons programme at secret bases and already possessed a nuclear capability.

Armenia is not taking part in the Tashkent Conference on Nuclear Non-Proliferation which ends Tuesday.

Relations have been extremely tense between the two former Soviet republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia since the fall of the USSR at the end of 1991.

The principal bone of contention is the situation in the separatist Azeri region of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is primarily peopled with Armenians.

Meanwhile, Washington's peace envoy for Karabakh will travel to the region next week for talks with Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders, officials said Tuesday.

Envoy Lynn Pascoe will seek to advance the U.S. effort to seek a peace settlement for the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, where Armenians are seeking independence from Baku.

"This is what we hope will be the beginning of much more intense discussions with the parties," said a State Department official, who asked not to be named.

Mr. Pascoe is due to travel to Yerevan, Baku and Stepanakert for talks that come on the heels of elections earlier this month in Nagorno-Karabakh that appear to have strengthened the hand of separatists.

Arkady Gukasyan, the newly elected leader of Nagorno-Karabakh, has vowed to settle for nothing less than full independence from Azerbaijan.

Ethnic-Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh drove out Azerbaijani forces in a 1988-1994 war that killed 20,000 people and resulted in the flight of the enclave's ethnic-Azeri population. A shaky ceasefire has been in effect since May 1994.

The United States, France and Russia have put forward a draft settlement that would grant the territory a high degree of autonomy.

Washington hopes that an accord can be signed before the end of the year.

Italian American groups say U.N. Security Council plan snubs Italy

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Representatives of Italian American groups launched a campaign Tuesday to oppose a U.S.-backed plan to enlarge the Security Council by adding permanent seats for Germany and Japan, but not Italy.

Martin Picillo, president of the Conference of Presidents of Major Italian American Organisations, called it a "plan that does nothing to strengthen America's interests, that does nothing to strengthen the U.N.'s interests, and that snubs one of America's most valued allies, Italy, and in the process, Italian Americans."

He told a news conference at the United Nations that the American people "do not share the State Department's obsession" with adding Germany and Japan as permanent council members.

"Italian American organisations are launching a nation-wide drive to convince the president and Congress to reject any U.N. charter amendment that excludes Italy from a meaningful role in new Security Council arrangements," he added.

Taking part in the news conference were the leaders of organisations said to represent 22 million Italian Americans and two former U.S. ambassadors to Italy, Peter Secchia and Maxwell Rabb.

"We call upon our elected officials to resist the State Department's vision of a Washington-Berlin-Tokyo Axis," Mr. Picillo said.

The United States said earlier this year it favoured giving permanent council seats to Germany and Japan and adding three more permanent seats for developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Italian U.N. envoy Franceso Paolo Fulci has strongly opposed adding any new permanent members. The council at present consists of five permanent members with the power of veto — the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China — and 10 non-permanent members.

Mr. Fulci proposes instead adding a number of non-permanent seats, with a rotating system favouring countries making a greater contribution to the purposes of the organisation.

Any reform of the council would require endorsement by two-thirds of the 185-member General Assembly and parliamentary ratification by two-thirds of the U.N. members, including all five current permanent members.

Mr. Picillo said that, under a new scale of U.N. contributions likely to come into effect in January, Italy would become the fifth largest contributor to the U.N. budget, ahead of Britain, Russia and China.

"And Italy has been a far more active leader in international peace operations than either Tokyo or Berlin," he said, referring to the reluctance of Japan and Germany, until recently, to provide troops for U.N. peace missions.

"We are especially concerned that the plan lumps Italy with the tiniest ministates in a fourth-rate category. Can a classless America push for a United Nations divided into classes ?" he said.

Japan SDP threatens to pull out of alliance

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Social Democratic Party (SDP) threatened Wednesday to pull out of a parliamentary alliance with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) if a minister convicted of bribery is retained.

The rift in the fragile alliance follows last week's move by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto to appoint Koko Sato as minister heading the management and coordination agency, in charge of Mr. Hashimoto's ambitious reform programme.

Mr. Sato, 69, was sentenced in 1986 to a two-year suspended prison term for accepting bribes in a scandal involving Japanese purchases of Lockheed planes.

"Mr. Sato should be removed. Otherwise the alliance cannot continue," SDP secretary general, Shigeru Ito, told reporters before a meeting with LDP counterpart, Koichi Kato and Hiroyuki Sonoda, secretary general of New Party Sakigake, the third party in the alliance.

Mr. Sonoda said a withdrawal from the three-party alliance was "possible" if Mr. Sato was not removed. "We share the SDP's views," he was quoted as saying.

An SDP official said no progress was made at the meeting and that further talks might be held Thursday after Mr. Kato reported back to the LDP executive.

"Circumstances are changing, as upper house members of the three parties are considering a possible censure motion," the official was quoted as saying.

During Wednesday's meeting, the two smaller parties reportedly accused the LDP of being "increasingly arrogant" towards the Japanese public.

Mr. Hashimoto earlier acknowledged that Mr. Sato's appointment — under pressure from former prime minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone — was responsible for a sharp decline in the government's approval rating in weekend polls.

"I take this as harsh criticism from the public," he was quoted as telling reporters at his official residence.

Three polls found that between two thirds and three quarters of voters disapproved of the new cabinet formed by Mr. Hashimoto last Thursday, with only one quarter to one third supporting the government.

In a related development, Mr. Nakasone reportedly apologised for "causing so much trouble" but said he hoped the issue would be "peacefully" settled.

Khmer Rouge clash with Cambodian troops in west

PHNOM PENH (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas claimed a military victory in the distant northeast Wednesday as rebels loyal to ousted Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh clashed with government troops in the west.

The guerrillas said in a radio broadcast they had defeated government troops and taken control of a remote district near the border with Vietnam.

"On Sept. 14 national soldiers and the people, who understand the new strategic policy joined together to fight and completely liberate Kaoh Nhek district town in Mondulkiri province," the radio said in a broadcast monitored in Phnom Penh.

"After liberating the district town, all villages and communes in the whole of Kaoh Nhek district were completely controlled," the radio said.

Clandestine Khmer Rouge Radio, for years the propaganda mouthpiece of the Maoist movement, said 15 government militia members had "confessed" and given up fighting for the government.

A senior official in the ministry of defence in Phnom Penh dismissed the rebel claim but said there were some Khmer Rouge fighters in the province.

"It is not true that they control that district but we know about 100 Khmer Rouge operate in the province, sabotaging and extorting money from villagers," General Prak Sovannak told Reuters.

In western Cambodia clashes between a group of Khmer Rouge fighters and government troops continued Wednesday, another government commander said.

Government forces had been skirmishing with 200 to 300 Khmer Rouge rebels allied to ousted First Prime Minister Ranariddh in the Samlot region since late last week, General Ko Chean said.

The rebels were part of a larger Khmer Rouge faction which defected to the government side last year. There have been sporadic clashes in the area since August.

Gen. Ko Chean said government reinforcements had been sent to the area. He said he had no information on casualties in the fighting.

The Khmer Rouge were responsible for the death of more than one million Cambodians in vast agricultural labour camps during their 1975-79 "killing fields" rule.

Over recent years many Khmer Rouge have defected to the government but a hard-line faction of several thousand still operates out of their Anlong Veng base in the north of the country.

The rebels, who purged their notorious leader Pol Pot at the end of July, have been helping forces under Prince Ranariddh battle government forces around the northwestern border town of O'Smach.

Second Prime Minister Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge soldier who broke with Pol Pot in 1977, ousted Prince Ranariddh on July 6.

The two premiers had set up a coalition government after U.N.-run elections in 1993 but bitter rivalry over the allegiance of defecting Khmer Rouge units and rows over power-sharing plagued their administration.

When toppled, Prince Ranariddh was on the verge of signing a political alliance with the Khmer Rouge leaders who purged Pol Pot and sentenced him to life under house arrest.

Prince Ranariddh Wednesday hailed parliament's failure to approve a controversial cabinet reshuffle as a denunciation of the new Phnom Penh regime.

In a statement, the ousted prince's cabinet said the vote was a "drastic step" in rejecting the demands of Mr. Hun Sen.

"This is the first time that the current National Assembly has taken such a drastic step in rejecting Hun Sen's nominations for ministerial portfolios," statement said.

It added the vote "clearly puts an end to the often-repeated assertion that the so-called coalition government established after the violent coup d'etat is working in 'good condition'."

On Tuesday, the reshuffle, which would have further consolidated Mr. Hun Sen's power, failed when only 67 MPs voted in favour of it, 13 less than the two-thirds majority needed to pass ministerial changes.

The move, which many expected the normally compliant parliament to pass overwhelmingly, would have removed four Ranariddh loyalists — who either fled the country after the prince's ouster in July or had not returned to Cambodia from prior trips abroad — from five cabinet-level positions.

It would also have replaced nine pro-Ranariddh secretaries of state or deputy ministers and created a new ministerial post, women's affairs.

Poland joins NATO accession talks

BRUSSELS (R) — Poland Tuesday became the second former Soviet-Bloc country to open talks on NATO membership, in an exercise aimed at extending the Western defence alliance beyond the former iron curtain in 1999.

Less than a week after Hungary opened its own talks, Poland joined NATO's eastwards expansion train at a two-hour meeting aimed at assessing how Warsaw can meet its political commitments.

"The discussion was very specific and detailed on many issues," Deputy Foreign Minister Andrzej Towpik told reporters after the first of up to five negotiating sessions aimed at sealing deals by end October.

The Czech Republic, the third former Eastern foe singled out to join the alliance at a historic Madrid summit in July, starts its own talks on Sept. 23.

If all goes to plan accession protocols should be forwarded for ministerial approval before the year end, giving NATO's sixteen members and the three would be members a full year in which to ratify the agreements extending NATO beyond the iron curtain in time for its 50th birthday in April 1999.

The initial talks focus primarily on protocol, ensuring that the would be members understand and accept the principles of NATO's 1949 founding Washington Treaty, budgetary requirements, participation in its command structure and internal security.

Poland insists that parliamentary elections which over the next days may bring a sweeping change in government will not impact on its drive to join the alliance.

Such is the general agreement in Poland over the need to enter NATO fast that the outcome of the Sept. 21 polls, pitting the ruling ex-Communists against a Solidarity Trade Union-led alliance, is not expected to influence the talks.

"As you know the positions of the parties participating in the elections on NATO are totally the same," Mr. Towpik told reporters.

Poland escaped Moscow's domination when Communist rule collapsed in 1989 and is eager to bind itself to the West.

Opinion polls show about 80 per cent of Poles want to join NATO and the current government does not consider that a referendum on the issue is necessary.

Poland sees gaining the necessary two-thirds majority for ratification of NATO's expansion in the U.S. Senate as its greatest challenge, because some senators have doubts.

Deputy Defence Minister Andrzej Karkoszka, who also attended Tuesday's negotiating session told reporters his delegation had not unveiled to its NATO counterpart a 15-year plan agreed by cabinet last week to modernise its forces up to NATO standards.

He said the issue could be discussed at the next negotiating session scheduled for Sept. 29, which will deal with defence and military issues.

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Season for reflection

THE OPENING of the fifty-second regular session of the U.N. General Assembly in New York Tuesday offers yet another opportunity to revamp the international organisation in order to make it more efficient and cost-effective. The start of the session is already marred by the refusal of the U.S. to pay up its arrears estimated to be around $1.5 billion despite serious efforts by the new secretary general, Kofi Annan, to cut costs and optimise its output. The Clinton administration has repeatedly made the payment of its past dues contingent on improving the performance of the U.N. as well as on cutting its share of the budget from 25 to 20 per cent.

Mr. Annan has taken some strides in restructuring the organisation, but he is nowhere near what really needs to be done. There is considerable overlapping in the functions of U.N. bodies, and repetitive work still seems to be the order of the day. It is estimated that international meetings could be cut by no less than 25 per cent without much harm, if any, to the overall performance of the organisation. Admittedly much of the continuing waste is attributable to resolutions of U.N. member states, which the secretary general has no option but to implement. Yet the new U.N. chief can take bold initiatives in that direction by openly and candidly cautioning members against the proliferation of meetings especially those from which little benefit can be derived.

Even holding three-month-long regular sessions of the General Assembly calls for review. It strikes us as too long a time when delegates stay away from their capitals reflecting on items that have been digested over and over again.

But the finances of the U.N. are not everything that concerns the international community. How to make the organisation of equal use to its members and more effective is also on the minds of many governments especially the have-nots among them. The U.N. could indeed spearhead a new campaign for a new international order that is not monopolised by the strong at the expense of the weak. There is an urgent need for a new set of checks and balances in developing a new order on the ashes of the old one. Unless there is a democratic sharing of power and influence, the basis for international and regional peace, stability and prosperity would erode.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for **Al Ra'i** focused attention on the amount of cigarettes which Jordanians smoke each year and the dangers inherent in smoking in general, calling on the concerned authorities to take measures to curtail smoking in the country. Fakhri Kawar said that according to some estimates, Jordanians burn $133 million worth of tobacco each year; the real danger, nevertheless, does not lie in the economic loss but rather in the consequences on the health of the Jordanian people. A greater sum is lost in treating the smokers from cancer, heart disease and many other illnesses related to smoking on which a fortune is wasted annually, said the writer. What is needed from the government is a constant, nationwide anti-smoking campaign and imposition of penalties and fines on the violators of regulations banning smoking in public places and means of public transport, said the writer. He said the government can ban smoking in its departments and can arrange for seminars and lectures to be organised in various regions, encouraging people to quit smoking to protect public health and to save a fortune for the national economy.

ANOTHER WRITER for **Al Ra'i** reflected on the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's trip to the Middle East, expressing the view that she had known in advance that nothing of substance would result from this visit. Fahed Fanek said that Ms. Albright had put off her trip on several occasions and was trying to avoid the trip for as long as possible, *knowing that no fruitful results would ensue in view of* her inability to pressure the Israelis to give up their policies. The writer said Ms. Albright had hoped that she would convince the Israelis to freeze the settlement programme in the Arab territories, but was disappointed in that regard, and was hoping to urge the Syrians and the Israelis to resume their peace negotiations, but was rebuffed. The U.S. secretary also came to the Middle East to persuade the Arabs to attend the Doha economic summit, where Israel will be represented, but her bid in this matter did not yield any fruit. However, and in a bid to show that her trip was not a total failure, the writer pointed out, Ms. Albright announced that the Israelis and the Palestinians have agreed to send delegations to Washington not to discuss the implementation of the Oslo accords but rather to discuss a mechanism for resuming contacts between the two sides.

View from Academia

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

Mideast peace should be about prosperity, not security

THERE IS something extremely false, and wrong, about the Israeli government's insistence on security prior to peace. For one thing, as has been emphasised by many, how can there be security without the establishment of durable peace first? The logic of those who see security happening before peace seems highly illogical. For another, security is a mutual concern, and right, for both Palestinians and Israelis, and not for the Israelis alone. Furthermore, security cannot be considered the sole responsibility of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA); it is also the responsibility of the Israeli government. In fact, the Israeli government has more power and influence (much more power and influence) than the PNA with respect either to stabilising or destabilising the situation in the region.

In addition to these three points, which seem obvious enough to all of us, I wish to underscore the following, which may either be not that obvious or has been (deliberately or unwittingly) side-stepped, central though it certainly is, through too much emphasis on minor or irrelevant points.

It is true, of course, that security is important. It is not easy, for a Palestinian or an Israeli, to live fearing that danger can come into one's life any second. Bombs planted in vegetable markets or in public areas are, in addition to the casualties they inflict when they go off, a nightmare to ordinary Israelis who want to lead a normal life. Similarly, the sight of Israeli settlers with guns, of Israeli soldiers chasing Palestinian children or shooting them with rubber (and at times real) bullets, and of bulldozers demolishing homes of Palestinian civilians is not a pretty sight. There has to be security for everyone in the promised land of milk and honey.

But security is not an ultimate goal. Rather, it is something basic, like the air we breathe and the food we eat. What we want is something more, much more; something higher, nobler and loftier: prosperity. We want not bread (though it is something basic in our daily nutrition here in the Middle East) but, as in the Biblical allusion, milk and honey in both a literal and a metaphoric sense. Bread is necessary and even delicious; but one cannot live just on bread.

Security then is a part, a portion, a fraction, a small piece of what we Middle Easterner hope to have or achieve.

But security, as used in the Israeli government's discourse, has a pejorative (even offensive) sense. The term is essentially military (militaristic, militant, etc.). The image that comes to mind when one speak about security in a military sense is a prison which is heavily guarded, a military fortress or a military camp with *guards aiming guns at you. Is this what the Israeli* government want Israel to be: a heavily-guarded prison, fortress, military camp? Nay, is this what it wants the whole Middle East to be? Well, look at Palestine today. What do you see? Does not it look like a military camp or a prison, with infinite borders, border-crossings, check-points, etc.? Is this what the promised land of *milk and honey amounts to?*

But security is both a red-herring and a misnomer. Security, as used in the Israeli government's discourse, means essentially life without physical danger. The Israeli government, as it publicly declares, is after life for itself and for its citizens (for itself and its citizens only) which is free from bombs, deaths, casualties, etc. But what about inner feelings of assurance that danger no longer exists? What about peace of mind? Security — again, as used by the Israeli government — does not cover these latter two domains. These are covered by the term "peace", which the Arab side and a portion of the Israeli public are insisting upon.

Peace is more inclusive, more comprehensive and more to the point. Security is only a piece of a much larger, much more important piece; peace, on the other hand, is that bigger piece which we are all after. In this sense, security is a red-herring and a misnomer.

But what we want — as the latter days of the Labour regime in Israel epitomised clearly, the days when we were talking seriously about normalisation, joint investment projects, tourism on both sides of the divide, real peace building, economic welfare for all, etc. — is more that even peace. For peace is not an end; it is a means to an end.

What we want is prosperity, not security. There is a big difference between living (in the Emersonian or Thoreauvian sense) and mere existence. We want the former; we want, in the words of the American founding fathers, a life of peace, of liberty and of the pursuit of happiness.

What we take against the present Israeli government is the vulgarisation of the peace discourse, the reduction of our hopes and aspirations, the insistence on dragging us into arguments about minor, peripheral, fractional or false points, and the determination (wittingly or not) to undermine and subvert the much that has been achieved. Yesterday (before the advent of the present Israeli government) we were talking and doing a lot (economic welfare, MENA summits, investment projects, the Red-Dead canal, tourist visas, airports, etc.); today, we are talking about much less — in fact, we are talking about almost nothing.

When nations of today's world are (have been for a long time) talking about welfare and prosperity, are not we, in the Middle East, somewhat old-fashioned, somewhat way behind, talking or accepting to talk about security?

Most probably, the Israeli government thinks it is doing a courageous thing by insisting, against the wish and will not only of the nations of the region but those of the globe, on the issue of security; it most probably thinks it is doing the smart thing by so insisting; and it most probably thinks it is doing its citizens a favour and a benefit.

For the reasons cited above, I believe that what it is doing is not courageous but easy; it is, as our daily life teaches us, much easier to undermine and subvert than to construct or contribute positively. For the reasons cited above, what it is doing is neither smart nor in the interest of its own people.

The courageous thing to do, the smart thing to do, and the thing that is in the best interest of the Israelis (and the peoples of the region) is for the Israeli government to a adopt a courageous humanitarian (not provocative or sulky) position in which we soon begin (again) to talk about peace, welfare and prosperity for all.

The biggest challenge for the present Israeli government is to humanise (not to toughen) its stance and approach

Moskovitz, patron of religious and expansionist Jewish groups, should not find understanding with Israeli government

By Michael Jansen

WHENEVER IRVING Moskovitz moves into the King David Hotel in Jewish West Jerusalem, there is trouble in Al Quds.

Last year, Moskovitz appeared at the inauguration of the controversial tunnel running alongside the foundations of the Haram Al Sharif. The opening of the tunnel sparked the worst rioting in the West Bank and Gaza since the intifada. This week, Moskovitz inaugurated a new Jewish settlement in Ras Al Amoud by turning over two Arab houses he bought there in 1991 to four militant settler families belonging to a new secular, right-wing group which calls itself "Jerusalem is Ours."

It is no coincidence that the move into the houses took place on the night after the Jerusalem municipality gave its final approval to plans submitted by Moskovitz for the construction of 70 housing units for Jewish settlers on a 15-dunum plot in Ras Al Amoud. For Moskovitz coordinates his moves closely with the Likud Mayor of West Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, who makes no secret of his plans to swamp Al Quds with Jewish settlers in order to prevent the emergence of a separate Palestinian sovereignty over the eastern portion of the city. Furthermore, Olmert is prepared" to defy anyone, including Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, to promote this settlement agenda.

While reaffirming his firm commitment to united Jerusalem and contention that Jews can settle anywhere and everywhere in "the land of Israel", Netanyahu has said he would do what he could to postpone the construction of the housing. But he has always argued this could create legal problems for the government. He is now saying the same thing about the four families squatting in the Moskowitz houses although there is a 1991 legal precedent for removing the settlers. Then as now, settlers moved into former Arab houses in Silwan; the Likud government of the day evacuated the settlers on the grounds that their presence posed a danger to the security of Israel and providing for their protection placed too great a strain on the security forces.

At that time, Yitzak Shamir was prime minister and he marshalled the forces in his government behind his decision to move the settlers. Netanyahu, whose coalition has been the most fractions and fragmented in Israel's history, hesitates to follow Shamir's example. The 17-member bloc of the Land of Israel Front in the Knesset has threatened to vote against the government if Netanyahu removes the settlers. The Front is make up of Knesset members from Netanyahu's own Likud, Foreign Minister David Levy's Gesher Party, Raphael Eitan's Tsomet and the National Religious Party. Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon has also said he opposes any attempt to remove the settlers. As a result, Netanyahu, rather weakly, says he is trying to persuade the settlers to leave of their own accord. But at what price?

Netanyahu is also constrained by the fact that Moskowitz was one of the major contributors to his campaign for the prime ministership and to the campaign coffers of his party. Moskovitz is a generous patron of religious and expansionist Jewish groups. He is also a man determined to get his way. The Mount of Olives is his latest target. He began with a large-scale housing project on his plot but this was denied ministerial approval last year; he then cut down this project to the present 70-unit plan which has been in limbo for several months; now he has contented himself with asserting a Jewish presence by planting 15 settlers in the houses he owns. Moskowitz owns property in other potential flashpoints, such as Jabal Abu Ghneim/Har Homa and Hebron, some of them purchased in dirty deals with shady Palestinian middlemen and non-Jewish foreign firms acting as fronts for his interests.

Moskowitz makes his money from bingo parlours, mostly located in the poor neighbourhoods of major U.S. cities, the black ghetto in Los Angeles being a particular target of his investments. He and similarly militant U.S. Jewish businessmen have undertaken to finance privately the sort of controversial settlement projects which the Israeli government prefers to shun.

One of Moskowitz important interests is the Ateret Cohanim yeshiva which is dedicated to the training of Jewish priests to serve at a rebuilt Temple of Solomon on the Haram Al Sharif after Al Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock have been destroyed.

In 1984, Moscowitz established the American Friends of Ateret Cohanim to raise money for the movement. Moscowitz was also a patron of Rabbi Meir Kahane and his "Kach" movement, which has been banned in Israel. It is not surprising that Baruch Marzel, a leading Kach activist, should have appeared at Ras Al Amoud this week as a spokesman for the settlers.

The Ateret Cohanim or "Crown of Princes" has planted groups of religious students throughout the Old City. The movement specialises in taking over expropriated Palestinian properties and squatting in houses or rooms of houses which are empty. Their aim, according to Likud spokesmen, is to "take greater control of the Old City". A settler's spokesman said this week that the aim of their implantation was to prevent the Palestinians from having a corridor, via Ras Al Amud, from Al Quds to the nearby West Bank villages.

Moskowitz has sunk millions of dollars into the West Bank and Gaza. He contributes to the Yesha (settlers) Council which lobbies for settler causes and funded the publicity campaign against withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan. It is estimated that Moskowitz gives $6 million a year to militant Zionist causes. He undertakes projects which the government wants to go ahead but which are "too hot to handle" — politically. Which is certainly the present case.

Moskowitz, reportedly, has round the clock police protection at the King David and goes everywhere with a personal bodyguard because he has, allegedly, been threatened by Islamic Jihad, the Palestinian equivalent of his beloved Ateret Cohanim. If the Israeli government is sincere in its disapproval of his activities, it should withdraw this police protection, paid for by the Israeli (and Palestinian) taxpayer and suggest he go home to Miami where the U.S. government might investigate his funding of "charities" with explosive political agendas. The U.S. cannot ask Arab governments to end funding of Hamas and Islamic Jihad without taking comparable action at home with respect to Irving Moskovitz and his colleagues.

Israelis to complete archaeological dig before Nov. 1, date for Jordan to begin laying foundations for dam on Yarmouk

'In the interest of peace,' Israel no longer asking for site to be moved into Syrian territory

From The Jerusalem Post

By Abraham Rabinovich

EVEN AS the Middle East peace process appeared to be yielding to rigor mortis after U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's cheerless visit, several hundred men were engaged last week from dawn to dusk in preparing the ground for one of the peace process' most tangible results to date — a dam on the Yarmuk River.

The workmen were not working on the dam itself, but are being employed by the Antiquities Authority to complete an archaeological excavation before the site is covered by a runoff channel from the dam.

"We've got to do a year's work in three months, so that the Jordanians can begin laying foundations for the dam by Nov. 1, as their agreement with Israel calls for," said Amir Drori, director-general of the authority.

The excavations at Tel Dover are being carried out in a hitherto closed military zone on the edge of the Yarmuk.

Israel will be giving up 12 dunums of land and a portion of its archaeological heritage. "We will be sacrificing antiquities in the interest of high policy, in the interest of peace," said Drori. "But first we want to document what there is here."

The dam will permit Jordan to utilise 500 million cubic metres of winter runoff that would otherwise be lost, and is a central element in the water agreement achieved earlier this year.

The northern edge of the dam will rest on the Israeli shore, a barren stretch of ground to which civilians have had no access. Most of this tract constitutes the lower part of Tel Dover. The Antiquities Authority received a government allocation that permitted it to muster 260 workers and a large professional staff for the emergency dig. Many of the workers come daily from Lebanon, the rest are Israeli Jews and Arabs. The area to be destroyed constitutes only 20 per cent of the tel, the rest of which is not endangered by the project.

Recent press reports have claimed that Israel was seeking to move the dam a kilometre upstream to spare the site. That would have put the dam into an area claimed by Syria, something vigorously opposed by Damascus. There were allegations that National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon favoured such a move in order to foreclose the possibility of the upstream area being returned to Syria in a Golan compromise.

However, Drori said the Antiquities Authority had reconciled itself to the loss of the site in the interests of peace and was not asking for the project to be moved. A spokesman for the National Infrastructure Ministry said last week that the present downstream site for the dam "has been agreed upon by Israel and Jordan in the framework of the peace agreement between the two countries."

The site had been originally thought to harbour only Byzantine and Islamic remains, but the excavation has revealed earlier settlement periods, including Israelite (11th-10th centuries BCE). There are extensive remains from a Jewish agricultural village during the Roman period, including a paved riverfront "boardwalk."

Northern district archaeologist Zvi Gal noted that the international road that led to Damascus and Mesopotamia crossed the Yarmouk somewhere near this point. An Arab fortress built on the site in the 10th century CE, on the ruins of a Byzantine monastery, may have been a strong point along that road, he said.

Surveying the scene from under his Australian-style forage hat, Drori noted that the area is familiar to him from his days as a Golani Brigade battalion commander in charge of the Yarmouk sector in the late 1960s. His men had engaged in numerous fights with Palestinian gunmen coming across the river, which is easily fordable at this time of year, and the soldiers had sometimes pursued the Palestinians back across the river onto Jordanian territory.

As Drori spoke, a Jordanian army truck passing on the other side of the river, barely 15 metres wide at this point, toot[illegible] the Israelis on the opposite bank.

Gal said the site may be opened to the public during Succot to permit a first and final, look at lower Tel Dover.

Society on the move

The 'to and fro' phenomenon of appointments

Kamel Abu Jaber

It is safe to say that the much rumoured appointment of Senator Kamel Abu Jaber as the new president of the Institute of Diplomacy is "in the bag." The former minister of foreign affairs has been recently spotted at the ID's Sweifieh offices. The post of ID president was vacated when Dr. Mazen Armouti was appointed as ambassador to Austria. What first appeared hazy was whether Dr. Abu Jaber, a political scientist, would maintain his seat at the Upper House of Parliament as well. But sources say that with the current makeup of the Senate showing three Christian members from Salt — Rajai Muasher, Kamal Shaer and Dr. Abu Jaber — it is most likely that a new senator will be appointed to reflect more diversity. Dr. Abu Jaber became foreign minister in the October 1991 cabinet reshuffle of Prime Minister Taher Masri. Later that month he was named to head the then joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid (Dr. Abdul Salam Majali headed the Jordanian team to the bilateral talks with the Israelis). Dr. Abu Jaber also served as minister of national economy in 1973, was executive director of the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (now Queen Alia Fund for Social Development) and chairman of the World Affairs Council.

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Suleiman Arabiyat

NEW HALLS: Another former minister (of agriculture), Suleiman Arabiyat, last week was appointed president of the University of Applied Sciences. Dr. Arabiyat, thus, makes the move from a state-run university, the University of Jordan, to a private institution. The appointment by the Council of Higher Education is in line with regulations whereby the nominations of private university presidents are made by the universities' board of directors, and final approval of nominees is granted by the council. Dr. Arabiyat is a professor at the University of Jordan Faculty of Agriculture and had served a three-year term as vice president for administrative affairs. The University of Applied Sciences began its first academic year in 1991-92. Today it enrols about 8,000 students and has a teaching staff of 360 holders of masters and Ph.D.s.

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Vaclav Havel

WITH CAP AND GOWN: Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel will be awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Jordan during his visit to the Kingdom. UJ President Fawzi Gharaibeh will present Mr. Havel, a playwright, with a doctorate in Human Letters Honoris Causa on Saturday at a ceremony to be attended by nearly 1,000 guests. This is only the third such degree the university presents: the first was presented to His Majesty King Hussein in 1962 and the other was presented to the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip, in the mid-80s.

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ENVOY UPDATE: Word on Jordan's foreign service scene is that five ambassadorial posts pending appointments are now as good as sealed. Some of the appointments bring figures from outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and others promoted staff from within. The appointments are said to be as follows: former Deputy Director of the General Intelligence Department Abdul Illah Kurdi to Malaysia; Institute of Diplomacy senior lecturer, former Royal Court officials and member of Jordan's delegation to the peace talks with Israel Dr. Musa Breizat to Turkey, retired Air Force General Nabil Barto to Oman, and from the ranks of the ministry itself Ahmad Hassan to Greece and Samir Hmoud to the United Arab Emirates.

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RECOGNISED: Here in Amman last week former Jordan Television Director Ibrahim Shazadeh was awarded the Istiklal Medal of the First Order for his services to the Kingdom. Mr. Shazadeh, who admits an affinity for writing, is now putting that interest to work in a weekly column for Al Aswaq Arabic daily. His comments last Monday on combating terrorism already drew him some congratulatory telephone calls.

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AN ARTS AWARD FIRST: Today a jury meets in Amman to make its final selection of the winners of the UNESCO/Sarvath Al Hassan Bursaries for Culture and Art, thus providing Arab artists the opportunity to spend residency periods training or working alongside other artists in reputable art centres and institutes around the world. This is the first year for the bursaries scheme which was developed jointly by UNESCO's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture and HRH Princess Sarvath, who has been a member of the Fund for several years. The jury is comprised of HRH Princess Wijdan Ali, Rafik Lahham, Michael Gibson and Jean-Marie Drot, and is assisted in its proceedings by the programme's manager at UNESCO, Nadia Khromchenko. The scheme is aimed specifically at Arab artists from within the Arab World. This year, 10 bursaries were made available to Arab artists in various fields, with three-month residencies on offer at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada, Sanskriti Kendra in India, ChangMu Arts Centre in Korea, Centro Cultural de Lagos in Portugal and the Gasworks Artists' Studios in the U.K., as well as a four-week residency at Arts International New York, a six-month residency at the Inter Cultural Centre for Transdisciplinary Practice, Exchange and Research in France and a two-month residency at the National College of Arts in Pakistan. The centres and institutes themselves run preliminary selection procedures with short-listed applications passed on to the jury for final selection. The jury will meet at the Jordan InterContinental Hotel, and the awards will be announced in "due course."

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LOTTERY TIME: The U.S. Government announced this week its annual diversity immigrant visa lottery programme (DV-99) under which a specific number of permanent resident visas will be awarded in 1999 to eligible persons from areas of the world that have low immigration rates to the United States. The visas awarded to winners in the lottery will be apportioned among six geographic regions in the world. According to the embassy, "Jordanians are eligible to apply for immigrant visas under this programme. Applications will be chosen at random by computer and winners only will be notified. The notifications will be sent by mail between April and July 1998 to the address listed on their entry. After being notified, winners will be eligible to apply for immigrant visas at the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. The usual criteria for granting immigrant visas will apply." The embassy asks that those interested not call the embassy but pick up instruction sheets (in English and Arabic) at the front gate of the embassy in Abdoun from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The application period this year will run from Oct. 24 to Nov. 24, 1997. The embassy warns that telephone inquiries about the programme will not be taken and applications sent to the embassy will be destroyed.

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Thacher Longstreth and Melanie Hopkins in Amman

FROM THE DAYS OF THE EMIRATE: Thacher Longstreth was only 14-years-old when he last visited Jordan in 1934. He was back this week with associate Melanie Hopkins to see how their home city of Philadelphia in the U.S. could collaborate with another Philadelphia, Amman, in striking up relations and bringing some tourism to the Kingdom. Sixty-three years ago, "in Jerusalem a young Englishman asked me to visit Petra with him. So we went, crossing the Jordan River and walked through the cleft (siq), and saw only the treasury. But when I visited the treasury last week, I saw everything, and I could not believe that there was a whole city. In 1934, Mr. Longstreth, who happens to be the grandson of the founder of Roberts College in Beirut (the forerunner of the American University of Beirut), had tea with Kamal Ataturk in Istanbul, and "heard Adolf Hitler speak at a square before one million people." Now a councilman at large for the city of Philadelphia, Mr. Longstreth, along with Ms. Hopkins, are determined to educate their community about the wonder that is Petra.

Jennifer Hamarneh

Making sense of events during and after the Gulf War

BOOK REVIEW

Martyrs' Day: Chronicle of a Small War
By Michael Kelly
Vintage Books, Random House, New York, 1994

The Children Are Dying: The Impact of Sanctions on Iraq
By Ramsey Clark (with reports by U.N. Food & Agriculture Organisation)
Published by World View Forum, Inc., New York, 1996

MICHAEL KELLY was a stringer for several news services during the Gulf War. Like Michael Herr, to whose brilliant book on Vietnam, Dispatches, Kelly's Martyrs' Day has been compared, the author maintains a perspective free from the constraints of political apology or partisanship. As nearly as is humanly possible in such a highly charged atmosphere, therefore, Martyrs' Day provides an objective account of "Desert Storm" from the beginning of the bombing in Baghdad to the ground war and ending with an astonishing tour of the Kurdish mountain villages. Kelly talked to everyone. Like Herr, Kelly refused to be limited by the censorship imposed early on by U.S. military personnel, choosing instead to find his own often hazardous way.

The book is not without comic relief: On the same plane taking him to Baghdad on Jan. 10, 1991, just a week before the bombing was to begin, were an unlikely assortment of Americans hoping to avert the catastrophe. Among them were Dr. Stephen Zunes and his Fellowship of Reconciliation; Daniel Ortega, deposed president of Nicaragua; PLO Ambassador to the U.N. Zuhdi Terzi, and Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam. When the press focused on the college peaceniks to the exclusion of the more famous visitors, Mr. Farrakhan demonstrated his public relations genius: Propelling himself into the midst of the students, he hugged them, and made smiling peaceful statements for the cameras.

In Baghdad Kelly talked to every strata of society from the rich to the poor, and to representatives from every shade of political opinion. He evokes the glorious past of Iraq, its great architecture and poets, its science and scholarship, all creating a sad contrast to the Iraq of the present. Perhaps the most touching chapters in Martyrs' Day contain Kelly's interviews with those Iraqis determined to remain in place, working tirelessly to restore or salvage what they can, enduring the hardships of the bombing and the sanctions, and who form an inspiring contrast to the carpetbaggers who are amassing personal fortunes at the expense of the defeated country.

Kelly left Baghdad at the height of the air attack, along roads made nearly impassable by craters and checkpoints, only to fly to Dhahran in order to cover the ground war. When he attended the official briefing held by U.S. military officials, he learned he would be expected to abide by tight censorship regulations and to take information from a press "pool." Rolling his eyes upward, Kelly went out to find a like-minded journalist and a car and drove north to the frontlines. This segment is not without a kind of black humour as they find themselves skirting checkpoints, sometimes getting ahead of the frontlines so that Iraqi soldiers were surrendering to them. These men desiring to kill no one, had buried their weapons and were close to starvation. Kelly and his journalist companion shared with their captives their hastily assembled rations and took as many as possible with them back to Dhahran. Returning stubbornly to the frontlines they observed the gallantry of Egyptian troops accepting the surrender of their Iraqi brothers and sharing food with them, and still other times heard the braggadocio of gung-ho Americans, contemptuous of an "inferior enemy" who sometimes used anti-tank weapons against individuals, chalking up the body count, without bothering to find out whether they were armed or not.

After recording the horrors of the "highway of death" (parts of which were so graphic and horrifying that I had to skip over them, having seen the pictures of the charred human remains in living colour), Kelly and his cohort entered Kuwait with the liberators to listen to the survivors' accounts of the occupation and make his own observations of the new American occupation. Neither makes a pretty story. The horror is heavy on the side of the first — i.e. that of Saddam Hussein's troops — and there is less than one might expect on the other side, e.g. the American supervision of the torture of Palestinians by Kuwaitis in the aftermath of "liberation" which has been documented by Radio Pacifica in the U.S., for example. But one can supplement this book with such more comprehensive accounts as Beyond the Storm and Altered States, both published by Interlink Publishing Group, Inc., Olive Branch Press, 99 Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11215, USA.

If Kelly brushed lightly over American failings in Kuwait, the epilogue on Kurdistan goes a long-way towards righting the balance. Crossing into Iran, Kelly followed up the horrors of the war with the equally shocking but often ignored horrors of the refugees displaced by the war. When the great powers cut up the map of the Middle East after the world wars, there was no Palestine and there was no Kurdistan. Whether by malicious design or majestic oversight, the consequences for both peoples has been catastrophic, partly because their exclusion has created excruciating suffering for them and partly because the consequent turmoil has provided unending occasions for intervention by the great powers. It is one of the great strengths of Martyrs' Day that, instead of catching the first plane back to the U.S. to join in the victory celebrations of General Schwartzkof and the jingoism of the yellow ribbon parades with their manufactured triumphalism, Kelly chose to look more closely at the human cost of the war. Securing safe-passage from a series of Kurdish chiefs, he visited refugee camps and mountain encampments of this embattled nation. Summarising the ambivalent policies of other nations with respect to the Kurds, Kelly lists the most important of many betrayals: "The second-most-important betrayal occurred in 1975 when the American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the shah of Iran decided to abandon military support for the pesh merga ("those who walk before death") guerrilla army of Mustafa Al Barzani, the head of the Kurdish Democratic Party and the most powerful leader of Kurdish Iraq." (p. 279). Kelly details the hundreds of thousands of Kurds who died and the thousands of Kurdish villages destroyed in the aftermath of this betrayal. The most important betrayal is also American: "The most important betrayal — most important because it stopped the clearest chance there ever was for the Kurds to get out from under the rule of the Baath — occurred at the end of the Gulf War, in late February and early March 1991, when the American government under the direction of President George Bush turned away from the Kurdish uprising it had encouraged, allowing the helicopter gunships of the Iraqi army to strafe civilians in the cities of Kirkuk and Sulaimaniya, and spurring the flight of somewhere between one and three million people from their homes. It was the television pictures of that terrible exodus — the scenes of weeping mothers burying their dead by the side of the road, of thousands of men scrambling for loaves of bread thrown from trucks — that had brought me reluctantly back to a war I had thought was over and won," (pp. 279-280).

What Kelly does not include here is the role of Henry Kissinger in this betrayal: I distinctly remember the TV newscast in which Henry Kissinger pronounced in stentorian tones that the coalition should not go into Baghdad and take out Saddam Hussein — leave him enough of his tanks and elite troops, he said, or it will "destabilise the region." And yet Americans naively wonder why there are people scattered around the Middle East who perceive Uncle Sam as the enemy.

Malnutrition, disease and deaths

The former American Attorney General Ramsey Clark has written several books and lectured tirelessly on the suffering of the Iraqi people in the aftermath of "Desert Storm." This book documents the suffering and death caused by the combined effects of the "precision" bombing and the sanctions: The Children Are Dying provides statistics on malnutrition, disease, and death of hundreds of thousands of children who were not even alive at the time of the war itself but whose lives have been cruelly attenuated by its effects. .

I was in Chicago in 1991 when Mr. Clark toured the country and was privileged to be present at his lecture and video record of his tour of Iraq made while the bombing was still in progress. Even then it was clear that the "coalition" (little more than an expedient fig-leaf for lethal U.S. intentions toward Iraq) directed its state-of-the-art military technology against hospitals, water purification centres, baby-milk production factories, and electrical generators. By hindsight it has become even more clear that this is a new form of warfare: A long-term strategy to render the enemy population helpless, to deny them all means of self-defence and recovery, in short to bomb them back into the Third World, as one observer put it. The U.S. aim, being enforced willy-nilly by the U.N., is to gain control of Iraq's natural resources, especially oil, and to make the country a market for multi-national corporations. The sanctions have systematically denied Iraq the replacements and spare parts with which to repair damaged medical and electrical equipment, to restore irrigation facilities, to rebuild food processing and agricultural production.

This new form of warfare was designed to obviate the outcry of the American public against the spectacle of their sons and daughters returning in body bags, a nuisance which seriously hampered the generals in their attempt to bring about a final-solution in Vietnam. It was this inconvenience which George Bush wished to avoid when he announced the final demise of the Vietnam syndrome: We can destroy Iraq without endangering the only lives which matter to us, he said in effect, which are American lives.

The Children Are Dying deals with this new form of warfare in an impressive essay entitled "A New Form of Violence" by Ramsey Clark in which he quotes the Pentagon as admitting that U.S. aircraft alone dropped the equivalent of 7.5 Hiroshimas during the Gulf War. It is true that these bombs generally were not directed against crowds of civilians (exceptions like the terrible loss of life in the bomb shelter at Amarriyeh notwithstanding) but against the life-support system of the whole country.

"There is not a reservoir, a pumping station, a filtration plant that wasn't deliberately destroyed by U.S. bombing to deprive the people of water. By the time I arrived in Baghdad ... Feb. 2, 1991... dump trucks were backing into the Tigris, lowering their tail gates, letting the water come in, closing the tail gates and driving out. Seems to me there would be a lot of leakage. They did it to take the water to people, raw water from the Tigris. The head of the Red Crescent, Dr. Alnuri, told me that week there were 6,000 deaths from dysentery and vomiting. They didn't have simple rehydration tablets costing a penny apiece. The babies simply died." (pp. 109-110).

Few people are aware of the calculated nature of the U.S. build-up to "Desert Storm," essential background for these two books. In May 1990, before the reassurances of April Glaspie to Saddam Hussein, and three months before his subsequent (consequent?) invasion of Kuwait, the New York Times published a long report leaked from a top-secret meeting at the Pentagon in which strategies for keeping the billions of its budget intact sans the Soviet threat. The gist of this article was the search for a country with a sufficiently large military power to justify the high levels of military expenditure to which U.S. generals had become accustomed. The only country (they couldn't very well declare war against France or England) to fit the potential enemy profile was Iraq.

In addition to the essays by Ramsey Clark, the book contains important articles by other authors: Kathryn Casa documents the insidious long-term effects of U.S. depleted uranium weapons during Desert Storm in "A Timebomb — Depleted Uranium," which include rickets, jaundice, epilepsy and brain damage in an alarming number of children. There is also an informative article by Dr. Safia Safwat, member of the Permanent Bureau of the Union of Arab Jurists. If "Iraq complied with U.N. Resolutions," Dr. Safwat details the unprecedented number, severity, and swiftness of U.N. resolutions against Iraq and the struggle of the sanction-crippled country to comply. At the end of the book the reader will find a list of organisations and individuals engaged in an effort to assist the victims of this new form of warfare and to publicise the plight of its youngest and most numerous victims, the children.

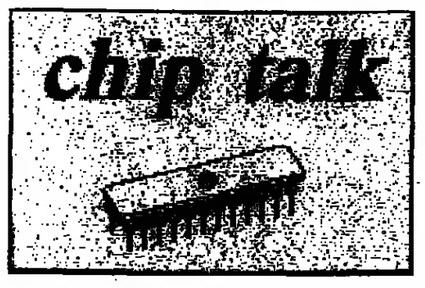
During the cold war, countries embargoed by the Western powers might count on support from the Soviet Union. Now, faced with the global hegemony of U.S. interests, countries like Iraq and Cuba have no place to turn. Except that is not quite true in the case of Iraq. It is a hopeful sign that Arab countries are beginning to rally round and form an alliance which might eventually ameliorate Iraq's plight. The Arab World has great resources if the will and the way could be found to mobilise them to create a corrective balance of power. It is fear of such an alliance which is fuelling the U.S. /Israeli saber-rattling against Iran.

Those two books are essential reading for anyone who hopes to make sense of the Middle East at this critical moment in history.

Dr. Clare Brandabur

The World Wide Wait

By Jean-Claude Elias



THOSE WHO are very good at decrypting acronyms think they know what WWW stands for. They probably believe that the Internet-related term means World Wide Web. Maybe not anymore. A well-known American columnist bas recently redefined it as the World Wide Wait. As tempting as it may be to agree with him, for the sake of sarcasm, some explanation is due bere.

The real strength, the actual quality of any system made of several links or components, is that of its weakest link or component. Consider a stereo system, consisting of an amplifier, a pair of speakers, a CD player, a cassette deck and a radio tuner. The quality of the output cannot surpass that of the component of lowest quality — ohviously. If the speakers generate distortion for example, using the best CD player won't improve the resulting sound at all.

The Internet also is a system with several components. In a simplified manner, they are your computer, its modem, the local telephone network, your server (the main computer to which you are linked and that connects you to the outside world) and the Web site you are contacting, wbich physically is also another server. It has become a trend recently to hlame the Internet in a global, general way. Frustrated users are saying that it is terribly slow and that there are traffic jams, bottlenecks and all kind of prohlems that prevent a satisfactory access to the Web. It may be true, but one must know that often the degradation in performance is due to the technical capahility and the "popularity" of the very site they are visiting.

Your PC, its modem, the quality of your local telephone network and the power of your local server are relatively well-known, and they have fixed values. What varies is the "quality" of your Web contact. You may call www.hare.com and find it lightning fast, while contacting www.tortoise.com will bring you close to a heart attack because of its slowness. The probahle reason will be that the computer server that "hare" is running is a Pentium Pro 200, wbereas "tortoise" could be using a sluggish Pentium 100 or even a pre-historic 486. It could also be that when you contacted "hare" there were few other callers like you trying to access it, whereas hundreds were dialing "tortoise" at the same time. On another day, at another time you may have different results. It's like driving at the Third Circle in Jabal Amman — traffic is not the same at 2:00 p.m. as it may be at 11:00 p.m.

It has become a habit to blame our local telepbone network or our ISP (Internet Service Provider, or local server). For having extensively used the Internet since the beginning of the year I can say the service we are getting in Jordan is good, more than decent. Cruising speed however may vary depending on the time of day and nn the very Web site we are trying to reach.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, September 18, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:10	Ovide And The Gang
2:30	The New Fred And Barney
3:00	*America's Funniest People*
3:30	He Shoots He Scores
4:30	Shingalana
5:00	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	French Programme
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Trivial Pursiut
8:00	The Parenthood
8:30	Lois And Clark — Superman
9:10	Kung Fu — The Legend Continues
10:00	News In English
10:30	Movie
12:00	Step By Step
12:00	End Of T.X.

Friday, September 19, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	Flintstones
2:30	Leo The Lion
3:00	Wishbone
3:30	French Programme
4:00	Family Matters
4:30	NBA
5:50	French Programme
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	French Programme
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Neighbours
8:00	The Health Show
8:30	Hawkeye Of Brisco County
9:10	Clive James Postcards
10:00	News In English
10:30	Best Seller
11:15	Movie Or Daddy's Girls

Saturday, September 20, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:10	Twinkle
2:30	Muppet Show
3:00	Blue Heelers
3:30	World Of Geo
4:00	The Valley Between
4:30	Tilt
5:00	French Programme
7:00	Le Journal
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Neighbours
8:00	The Newly Weds
8:30	Prism
9:10	Time Trax
10:00	News In English
11:15	Movie
12:00	End Of T.X.

Sunday, September 21, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:10	Little Rosey
2:30	The Magic School Bus
3:00	Lucky Luke
3:40	Energy Express
4:00	American Chart Show
5:00	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Fresh Prince Of Belair
8:00	Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
8:30	National Geographic
9:10	Renegade
10:00	News In English
10:30	One West Waikiki
11:15	Sisters
12:00	End Of T.X.

Monday, September 22, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:10	The Show With The Mouse
2:30	Cowboys Of The Moo Mesa
3:00	Gillette Sports Special
3:30	Deep Water Haven
4:00	Animal Show
4:30	Ocean Girl
5:15	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	French Programme
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Neighbours
8:00	Murphy Brown
8:30	Babylon 5
9:10	Highlander
10:00	News In English
10:35	Emergency Room (E.R.)
11:15	Homicide
12:00	End Of T.X.

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:10	Sandocan
2:30	C.R.O.
3:00	Square One T.V.
3:30	Skippy
4:00	Album Show
5:00	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Coach
8:00	Tilt 23.5
8:30	Encounter
9:10	Nature Of Things (Documentary)
10:00	News In English
10:30	Great Defender
11:15	I Remember Nelson
12:00	End Of T.X.

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:10	Jonny Quest
2:30	Super Dave
3:00	Secrets of Treasure Island
3:30	Spell Binder
4:00	Munsters Today
4:30	Border Town
5:00	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Neighbours
8:00	Soldier's Diary
8:30	Oprah Winfrey Show
9:10	Challenges
10:00	News In English
10:30	Land's End
11:15	American Gothic
12:00	End Of T.X.

Dwelling on the past gets us nowhere

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

DWELLING ON the past gets us nowbere. We need to look beyond it and into the future.

To make things easier to understand, compare two contrasting newspaper articles that appeared in the press during the last few days. One is taken from the local press bere in Jordan while the other one is from the British press.

The first article appeared in Al Ra'i newspaper on Sept. 11 while the other appeared in the Independent newspaper on the Sept. 8.

In the former the author attacks the present state of mind of the Jordanian people calling for positive thinking by invoking the past.

He begins by describing bow everyone living in Jordan today owes a great deal to the country, even for the air they breathe and the earth they step on. He then goes on to describe bow Jordanians had helped in the past to build the many countries where they had been working, and how many had died defending many more.

He demands that we be grateful that our villages were never destroyed for voicing opposition to certain lifestyles.

He also mentions the many wars that Jordanians had fought to defend this country. He sketchily describes some of the particularities of the wars of 1967 and 1973 and goes to some lengths to highlight Jordanian bravery in battles.

In conclusion, he demands that we acknowledge that Jordan is doing extremely fine and that its citizens are its most important assets.

Our dear writer does not, even for a single moment, stop to think or to tell us bow he proposes Jordan use its past achievements to create a brighter future.

It is very easy to quote the past when either defending or apologising for the present, but what we are seeking here, and what this column will seek from now on, are ways of creating this brighter future hy building on the past. By using this past for our well being rather than for apologising for our present sorry state.

This is where the second newspaper article becomes relevant. And even though it talks about Britisb particularities, there are many lessons to be learnt from the ideas it is meant to promote and its innovative concepts for future-building.

Its author argues for a new national identity for Britain because he claims that the British are somewhat confused about who they are today. He catcbes a popular introspective mood and outlines proposals for giving Great Britain a new image of itself fit for a new century.

To get his point across, he mentions how Ireland has recently transformed its image from that of rural, traditional Catholic country to an innovative Celtic tiger. And how Spain managed to shed the shadow of Franco and redefine itself as a modern democratic industrial nation using the Espana picture by Miro as a national logo symbolising a bright, optimistic young country.

He writes that the key to renewing identity is to define an ethos or story that is unique to the country and rooted in reality. What Britain needs, he says, is a story which makes sense of where it has come from, reflects the best of wbat it stands for today, and makes a very strong statement about where it is going.

The latter part of this last sentence is the one element that is until now missing from our local national debate in Jordan.

Somewhere amidst the realities, the lies, the propaganda and the good and bad of our lives lies this very strong statement that we seek in order to find that better fit between our heritage and our future.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mohammad A. Shuqair

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

• **The Bride's Cake**

This important part of the wedding feast has come down from the Romans, who baked one compounded of flour, salt, and water, which was partaken of by the bridal pair and their friends as they witnessed the wedding contract.

* * *

• ***The Bride's Dowry***

The phrase "with all my wordly wealth I thee endow" dates back to primitive times when a man bartered so many head of cattle for his bride. This money, known as "dow", or "dower," was originally banded over during the ceremony, and in the course of centuries the bride's father provided its equivalent either in money or kind.

Later still the hride herself spun the linen for her portion, and was not regarded as eligible for wifehood until she had stocked a chest with her bandiwork. The term spinster arose in this way, and if a girl's marriage was delayed until she was of mature age she occasionally sold the contents of her linen cbest and set aside the proceeds as ber dowry. The box, with a lid whicb is to be found in old-fashioned chests and trunks, was destined as receptacle for money thus earned and earmarked.

* * * *

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

** No entrance.	**Mamnoo' ad'dukhool.**
** No smoking.	**Mamnoo' at-tad'kheen.**
** Spitting prohibited	**Mamnoo' al-basq.**
** Admission free.	**Ad-dukhool majjanan.**
** Entrance.	**Dukhool.**
** Exit.	**Khurooj.**
** Information	**Is'ti'lamat.**
** Push	**Id'fa al-bab.**
** Pull	**Is'hab al-bab.**
** Open	**Maftooh.**
** Closed.	**Mug'laq.**
** No parking	**Mamnoo' al-intizar!**
** Flat to let.	**Shuqqa lil'ejar.**
** Beware of pickpockets.	**Ihtaress min an'nash'shaleen.**
** Pay at the cashier	**Al-daf' fil khazina.**
** Wet paint	**Ihtaress min al-bouyah.**
** Don't touch	**Mamnoo' al-lams.**
** Drive slowly	**Suq bi-bot'**
** Danger	**Khatar.**
** Stop.	**Qiff.**
** Ring the bell.	**Doq al-jarass.**
** Diversion	**Mun'ataff.**
** Keep off the grass.	**Ibta'id an al-hashaa'ish.**
** Pick no flowers.	**La taqtiff al-azhar.**
** One-way traffic.	**Tareeq fit-tijah wahid**

* * * *

JOKES

• A WOMAN asked her nephew: "What do you usually do on Saturday afternoon?"

"I go to see a foothall match."

"What do you usually do on Sunday afternoon?"

"I go to Sunday school."

"Whicb one do you like best?"

"No difference between both, auntie. In the church, they say "stand up for the sake of Jesus" and in the playground they say "Sit down for the sake of Jesus."

* * *

• AT A FOOTBALL MATCH a week ago, the public protested against the referee.

Among the crowd, a woman's voice was heard aloud: "KILL HIM."

Asking who that woman was, they were told sbe was his wife!

* * * *

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

LOVE SONGS

1. In one of Bing Crosby's first freat hits, he remarks that his sweetie is better than Venus de Milo because his sweetie can hug him back. While all this hugging is going on. "Love Is.....".
2. Nominated for an Academy Award, "Love Is" the opening song of what movie?
3. In the title song of the movie that gave us "Donkey Serenade." Love dies while it is gleaming because it is like.....
4. So what if the Rockies crumble and Gibralter tumbles! A haunting tune from George and Ira Gershwin assures us that our "Love is.....
5. A Cole Porter song asks the musical question "What is This Thing Called Love? What is the answer?

* * * *

PUZZLES

(A) INSERT THE NUMBER MISSING FROM THE BRACKETS:

188	(300)	263
893	(...)	915

* * *

(B) UNDERLINE WHICH OF THESE IS NOT A FILM STAR:

BALEG DABTOR RAYLOT OROPEC PALSREM

* * *

(C) NAME THEIR BABIES

It's back to 'no more Mr. Nice Guy' for Michael Douglas

By Douglas J. Rowe
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Michael Douglas sees his latest movie as "a scrooge parable" in which he plays a self-involved, coldhearted, bah-humbug type, a man who lacks spirituality and love.

Yep, once again it's "no more Mr. Nice Guy" for the actor who won an Academy Award for personifying 1980s greed in Wall Street, battled his wife to the death in The War Of The Roses, and endangered his family by cheating on his spouse with a psycho in Fatal Attraction.

"Playing victims is not a lot of fun," he says, explaining his affinity for the flawed, even venal, characters for which he's most famous.

In The Game, he's a multimillionaire businessman with a control freak streak as wide as a paint-roller. For his 48th birthday, he gets a "gift" that strips him of his sense of power and privilege.

Douglas, who turns 53 on Sept. 25, says that unlike his Father Kirk's era, when heroes and villains were neatly delineated, we're in a time of gray areas where no one's completely a saint or sinner. So he gloms onto stories about people for whom "each day we wake up is a struggle to behave in a ... decent way. And I like that."

He attributes his willingness to play unlikable characters to his "risk-taking" inclinations and his "insane confidence or belief that you can do that because they (the audience) know that you are likable."

And at this point in his career, he feels that audiences accept him in different kinds of roles and don't pigeonhole him in any "persona."

"When people come to me, they say, 'when I see your name, I don't know what kind of picture it's going to be, but I know it's going to be a good picture.'"

And as often as not, it's going to titillate, infuriate — and instigate a buzz.

Single women wanted to boil somebody — if not a bunny — for the depiction of the desperate woman with whom he has an affair in Ffatal Attraction, homosexuals were angered by the lesbian link to murder in Basic Instinct and many P.C. sensibilities were offended by the role reversal in Disclosure, in which a corporate virago sexually harasses a man. Some even saw his great white nerd in Falling Down as an apologia for bigotry.

Michael Douglas as Gordan Gekko, in the movie Wall Street

His penchant for making timely, and politically or emotionally charged films goes back to The China Syndrome, a 1979 movie about a nuclear plant accident which he produced and co-starred in with Jane Fonda. Two weeks after the film opened, the nation's worst nuclear plant accident occurred at Three Mile Island near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

"I read a lot of newspapers. I like to feel that I'm pretty informed about current events, or the character of our society," he says, denying any rarefied isolation of a big movie star.

"I don't feel that different from other people. And now with my success, it's given me the confidence that if I see something that's pretty weird as a script but it really intrigues me, then I'm haunted by it," he says.

Some scripts he likens to a fast-food meal. "You've eaten it; it just fills you up, and life goes on. Other times, you can remember certain meals you've had and talk about them afterwards," he says.

Donglas says he concerns himself with the quality of the movie first, then his part — thinking that stems from his experience and success as a producer.

The first feature film he produced (with Saul Zaentz) won five Oscars, including best movie — 1975's One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest. Since then he's produced Romancing The Stone, starman, The Jewel Of The Nile, and this summer's hit Face/Off, directed by John Woo.

"Some actors really just look for their part, and turn the pages (to the script) and see how their part is," Douglas says.

"I like movies. I want to be in a good movie. A good movie is more important than a good role. For an actor, a role has to serve the function of the movie. There has to be a purpose for that role to make the movie work.

"So I try to see what my responsibility is to the movie, because if the movie works then we all benefit. Good movies have a way of making everybody look good. Sometimes you get singled out in a bad movie — you know, a good performance — but generally a bad movie pulls everybody's work down."

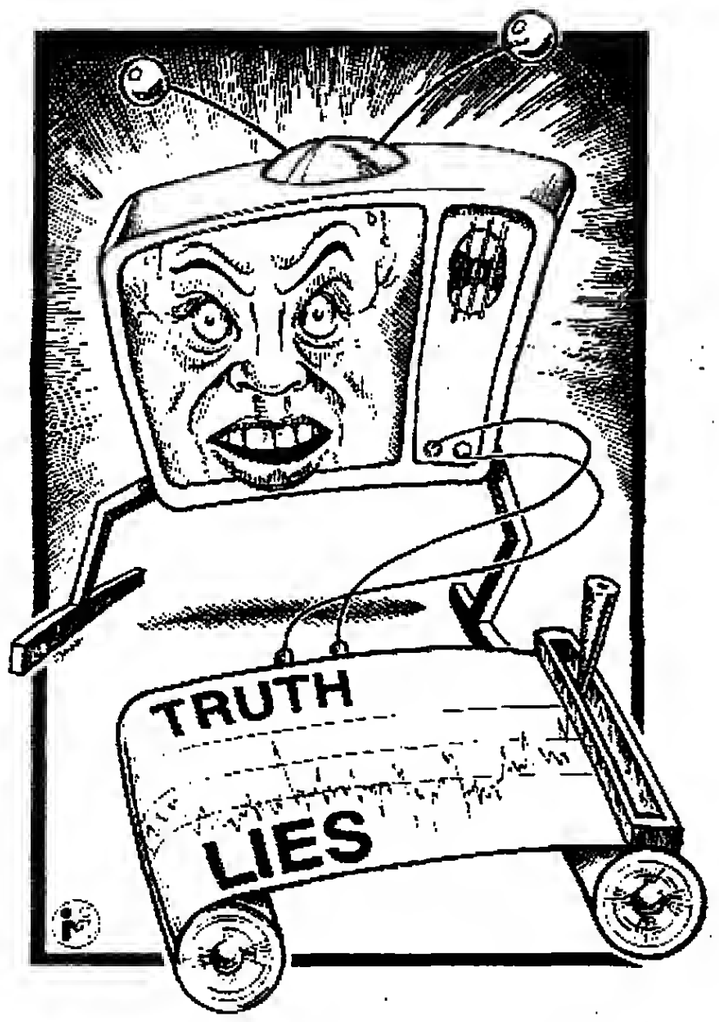
Born in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Douglas was the eldest of two boys from his father's first marriage. His parents moved to Hollywood to pursue acting careers. But while his father's took off, his mother's didn't, and they eventually divorced in 1950. Douglas and his brother moved back east, where their mother remarried.

An admittedly indifferent student, he attended various schools before completing his secondary education at the elite New England prep school Choate. Although he was accepted at Yale University, he choose to attend the University of California, Santa Barbara. He flunked out in freshman year, then knocked around for 18 months before returning to the school and majoring in drama, getting his degree in 1968.

TV critics show how the camera can lie

South Africa has set up a task force to review broadcasting laws amid moves to liberalise TV and radio services. The reforms follow criticisms that the state-controlled electronic media acted as a vehicle for propaganda and disinformation in the pre-democracy days.

By Joyce Ozynski



JOHANNESBURG — The propaganda role of South Africa's media in supporting the former apartheid regime is to come under the spotlight of the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The commission, set up to expose past misdeeds with a view to healing wounds and learning lessons, will be told how information was processed and distorted to manipulate public opinion.

Critical reports from several groups, such as the Freedom of Expression Institute, will be submitted at hearings in Johannesburg.

"The commission wants to see whether the media promoted certain views, and will make recommendations for the future so that similar things don't happen again," says Laura Pollecutt, the organisation's communications officer.

The bitterest controversy is likely to be over the role of the English-language press, which saw itself as a voice of dissent, but which the Forum of Black Journalists says "wittingly colluded with successive apartheid governments to perpetuate the system of apartheid."

Submissions are also being made about the state-controlled broadcast media giving outsiders an opportunity to see how propaganda works.

A report by John van Zyl, of the independent Media Monitoring Project, describes the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) as a "willing lackey of the government," promoting policies even more conservative than those of the National Party, which ruled throughout the apartheid era.

Van Zyl says the Broederbond, the elite Afrikaner secret society, played a key role in enabling the National Party to subordinate the electronic media to its own goals, shaping policy and determining high-level appointments.

Dr. Piet Meyer, Broederbond chairman from 1960 to 1972, was also the head of the SABC from 1959 to 1971.

SABC radio dominated the airwaves, and broadcasting laws set up separate language channels for black listeners, reinforcing racial separation.

Some conservatives in government were worried about the social effects of television, which was not introduced until 1976, six years after a Broederbond document set out plans for it.

The SABC still maintains a monopoly over the medium, although some of its three channels may be sold off under broadcast liberalisation plans.

Van Zyl's study scrutinises news, current affairs, documentaries, dramas and religious programmes aired between 1977 and 1989.

Analysis of news broadcasts illustrates how the SABC omitted important events taking place in South Africa, and distracted viewers with coverage of conflict elsewhere.

During the week 23-30 October, 1985, for example, state TV news ignored large-scale demonstrations in Cape Town. Bulletins focused instead on items such as a speech to the United Nations by the British premier of the time, Margaret Thatcher, and comments by former United States President Ronald Reagan on terrorism following the hijacking of an airliner.

To help control coverage of unrest, the government placed restrictions on media access to volatile townships such as Soweto, "except for approved SABC TV footage."

When news reports did turn to township struggles they concentrated on images of crowds, stone-throwing and flames. Police were characterised as having to resort to force only with the greatest reluctance.

The submission notes that "drama as propaganda" was often broadcast. Hennie Human, of the Afrikaans Drama Department, is said to have commissioned — and in some cases to have written — nationalistic and racist melodramas, such as Rooi Komplot (Red Conspiracy).

He is also said to have helped script a South African Defence Force (SADF)-funded film that starred the daughter of the former prime minister, P.W. Botha, and that is described as "a rabidly anti-Communist and anti-terrorist propaganda piece."

Many dramas and documentaries are said to have helped to create a war psychosis.

Cliff Saunders, a leading political commentator, produced a documentary on the 75th anniversary of the SADF in 1987. It is described in the submission as "not a documentary, but a propaganda film about the need for war."

Brug 14 (Bridge 14) and Vuis vir Vrede (Fist for Freedom) gave the SABC version of events in Angola, in which SADF soldiers played Cubans, Russians and South Africans in combat scenes centring on a South African hero.

Documentaries produced by a right-wing journalist, Al Venter, depicted the rest of Africa as a ruined and helpless continent, says the submission.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which may call or subpoena SABC personnel to give evidence, will produce a final report after studying the submissions — Genini News

20 years on, Maria Callas attracts new audiences

By David Cutler
Reuter

LONDON — "It was something one hears only once in a lifetime — indeed, one is fortunate to hear it once," said Italian baritone Tito Gobbi of soprano Maria Callas.

This month, the 20th anniversary of Callas's death finds her reputation growing and her performances attracting fresh audiences around the world.

In Britain alone her recordings for EMI "outsell all other living sopranos..." due to her "sheer diva genius," said a company official.

Her official recordings, dating back to 1953, are selling at 750,000 a year throughout the world and comprise 10 per cent of all EMI classics back catalogue sales. To celebrate the anniversary EMI have rereleased her catalogue in new presentations.

As well as her commercial recordings, some never before issued, a number of her famous performances on stage will be released.

To open the 1960 season at Milan's La Scala, Callas starred in Donizetti's opera Poliuto with the tenor Franco Corelli which was broadcast and issued on various pirate releases. This will be a highlight of EMI's anniversary compact discs.

'With tremendous will she became the legend'

Maria Callas was born in New York in 1923 of Greek parentage and made her debut in Athens in 1941. With the intervention of World War II her career blossomed only in 1947 with a performance of Ponchielli's La Gioconda at the Verona Arena in Italy.

This performance was under the direction of conductor Tullio Serafin who became her musical mentor. Over the years he guided her and brought out the uniqueness in her artistry.

The noted Polish bass Marian Nowakowski, who Sang with Callas at London's Covent Garden in Verdi's Aida, said "the sound of the voice was so instantly recognisable and all the words she sang had the right colours to convey the meaning to all who watched."

Callas had authority in everything she did. Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians says "she had the deepest understanding of the classical Italian style, the most musical instincts together with exceptional dramatic powers."

"I was something new to listen to," said Callas in a 1967 interview.

Gobbi said in his memoirs "all must be contained within the musical form — the integration of acting and singing must be absolute. In Callas this integration became nothing short of miraculous."

Vocally speaking, Callas was not perfect. There were a number of notes that wobbled. This can be heard in her recordings of Bellini's Norma and in her aria O Don Fatale from Verdi's Don Carlos.

But this never detracted from her ability to put across the tragedy or vulnerability of her character.

Her accompanist Robert Sutherland said after one aria in her 1973-74 comeback recitals that it was the most terrible sound he had ever heard. However she adapted the music to change the effect and it was fantastic theatre.

The tragedy of Callas was the conflict between the demands of being a woman and those of being an artist.

Her wish to transform herself from an ungainly young woman to the slim, stylish and elegant diva she became took tremendous willpower.

In the late 1950s she began a tempestuous relationship with Greek shipping millionaire Aristotle Onassis.

It was only after this cooled that she returned to the theatre in what turned out to be her last stage appearances in 1964 and 1965 in Puccini's Tosca and Bellini's Norma.

In 1971-72, still feeling the need to be involved with music, she gave some masterclasses at the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

These were recorded by EMI and author Terrence McNally wrote the Tony-Award winning play Master Class. To celebrate the anniversary it opened in London in May with the actress Patti Lupone.

On Sept. 16, 1977 Callas died of a heart attack alone in her apartment in Paris. Italian conductor Carlo Maria Giulini said that she craved the response of an audience to survive.

Callas changed the face of opera singing

With her it was not simply listening to beautiful sounds. It became possible to care about the feelings of "Lucia Di Lammermoor" or "Anna Bolena" as characters.

In John Ardoin's book The Callas Legacy, McNally said, "opera has new possibilities, thanks to her — after Callas there is no turning back."

Hollywood cinema distributor brings hope to Bangladesh cine lovers

By Nadeem Qadir
Agence France Presse

DHAKA — Bangladeshi movie buffs will be able to see Hollywood blockbusters in a refurbished theatre here after a long diet of Bengali and cheap Western films.

Films such as Raiders Of The Lost Ark, Congo and Sudden Death will be shown at Dhaka's oldest and popular Modhumita Theatre, said Muhammad Iftekharuddin, director of Channel Cinema Ltd., local distributors of United International Pictures (UIP).

Modhumita officials said the theatre has been fully refurbished and digitised.

Attendances had dropped in the theatre over the past 26 years as moviegoers were served a diet of weak crime movies, thrillers, soft-porn and cheap Western movies. Bengali films, hugely influenced by Indian Hindi movies were also shown.

"We are not looking for any huge profit now but just wanted to start the ball rolling," Mike MacClesfield, vice president, international sales and development of UIP told AFP.

"All I have to do is press a button and the latest Hollywood hits will be in Dhaka, but our distributor here has local problems, including bureaucracy," he added.

Mr. MacClesfield said he found in his first visit to Dhaka that the tastes of the audience were similar to those in India and Singapore.

Mr. Iftekharuddin said access to the best of Hollywood will bring "the lost glory of theatres ... back in Bangladesh too as everyone will not like to sit home and watch videos when they can see it on the celluloid screen."

UIP — jointly owned by Paramount, Metro Goldwyn Mayer and Universal Pictures — will release hits through Channel Cinema Ltd. of the Modhumita Group.

After many moviegoers were lured away by the attractions of video and cable television, the cinema has experienced a boom in recent times in Bangladesh but not necessarily because of the quality of the fare.

Many patrons, particularly students, say they go to the theatre to "kill time."

Mr. MacClesfield described the condition of theatres here as "pitiable" and said he could not imagine anyone watching a movie here "even if he is given a free ticket."

The UIP official saw business prospects in Bangladesh as "positive" despite tax hurdles facing theatre owners and the fact that films must face the board of censors before being screened.

However, he warned the government should take steps to crack down on movie piracy to safeguard the profits of importers

"We aim to release the latest (films) simultaneously in Bangladesh, India and Singapore," Mr. MacClesfield said.

One video shop owner told AFP he had lost substantial business after cable television was introduced and if Hollywood hits were screened in the theatres then he would face further losses.

"We will then have to concentrate on Indian Hindi and Bengali movies in the cities and focus our business on smaller districts," he said, asking not to be identified.

But another video shop owner believed most people had become accustomed to home viewing and he said he did not foresee any major slump in his business.

Mr. Iftekharuddin said the Channel had invested about four million taka ($91,000) in the project.

Drugs offer new hope for osteoporosis — studies

WASHINGTON (R) — Osteoporosis researchers have said that drugs were offering new hope for preventing and treating the disease.

Drugs such as Alendronate, sold by Merck as Fosamax, and Calcitonin-Salmon helped prevent new fractures in women who already suffered fractures and also in those at risk because their bones were thin.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation said it was especially excited about work with Calcitonin-Salmon, a synthetic version of a natural hormone that is now available as a nasal spray. It is sold in the United States by Novartis and elsewhere by Cortecs International.

More than 1,100 women in 42 different locations got either Calcitonin-Salmon or an inactive substance along with Vitamin D and calcium supplements.

Those who got Calcitonin showed "significant increases in bone density," scientists from Memorial Health Centre in Worcester, Massachusetts, Washington University in St. Louis and several other universities told the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research, holding its annual meeting in Cincinnati.

"Over a three-year period, the patients receiving the currently available dose (one spray daily) of Calcitonin-Salmon had 37 per cent fewer new spinal fractures than those receiving the placebo," they said.

Scientists at the University of California at San Francisco, working with Merck, had already found that Fosamax reduced the risk of spine, hip and wrist fractures by about 50 per cent in women who had gone through the menopause and had suffered fractures due to thin bones.

They told the meeting that work with more than 4,000 women showed Fosamax slightly increased bone density and reduced the risk of spine fractures by 51 per cent over four years.

"Many women are not aware that the loss of height and stooped posture associated with osteoporosis is actually the result of fractures of the spinal bones," Sandra Raymond, executive director of the National Osteoporosis Foundation, said in a statement.

"If we can prevent multiple fractures from occurring in the spine, we can help women avoid the irreversible changes that happen as the spine collapses. Fractures and a shrinking frame are not inevitable consequences of aging."

The foundation estimates that 10 million Americans have osteoporosis and 18 million more, mostly women, have low bone mass that puts them at risk.

Experts say 200 million people worldwide suffer from the disease.

Other studies showed that new drugs still undergoing clinical tests before getting Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval may also offer hope.

Raloxifene, a member of a class of drugs known as Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators, seems to mimic some of the effects of Estrogen like preventing bone loss and lowering cholesterol. But it evidently does not increase certain risks of cancer.

A study of 143 women with osteoporosis indicated that Raloxifene helped prevent bone breakdown and reduced blood cholesterol levels.

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, working with manufacturers Eli Lilly and Co. said it did not seem to work as effectively as Estrogen. But they said the drug would be useful for women with a history of breast cancer or others who would want to avoid Estrogen.

Strontium Ranelate also showed promise in increasing bone density. Strontium is similar to calcium and seems to stimulate the bone producing cells known as osteoblasts.

Risendronate worked in the opposite way, by inhibiting osteoclasts — the cells that resorb, or dissolve, bone mass.

Yet another study showed that sodium monofluorophosphate — the active ingredient in many toothpastes — could also reduce fractures.

Doctor makes people nauseous to make them well

By John Hayes
Reuter

PITTSBURGH — Dr. Robert Stern's medical research makes people sick. Literally.

Dr. Stern, a psychology professor at Pennsylvania State University, has developed what he fondly calls the "Sick Machine." In technical terms, the device is an Optokinetic Drum that Dr. Stern said could condition people to become more immune to the unpleasantness of nausea.

"It's like getting sick for the first few days of a cruise. After a while you get used to the constant motion," he said. "We can desensitise people in three sessions, maybe four."

Dr. Stern developed the machine with Dr. Kenneth Koch, a gastroenterologist at Hershey Medical Centre. The drum fits over a person's head, much like a hair dryer at a beauty salon, and begins spinning with the flick of a switch. The inside of the drum is painted with black and white stripes, a pattern that in motion tends to induce a feeling of nausea, Dr. Stern said.

The procedure could be helpful for people who often experience nausea such as patients undergoing chemotherapy, astronauts and military pilots. Dr. Stern said a few sessions with the sick machine could desensitise people to nausea so they are less likely to feel sick when they undergo an actual hospital treatment or get on a plane or boat.

'Sick Machine' could help cancer patients

The machine is stirring some interest in the medical community. Dr. Sean Burton, an oncologist in Chicago with a private practice, said Optokinetic Drum treatment could make life easier for cancer patients who receive chemotherapy treatments to kill cancer cells, which frequently leaves patients feeling nauseous.

"Maybe they could come in for such treatments before undergoing chemo and get used to the unpleasant feelings," he said.

Dr. Stern and Dr. Koch have researched the sensations of nausea for 15 years. Their research on tachygastria, the rhythm of stomach contractions that increases as vomiting becomes imminent, resulted in the first quantifiable scale that could rate levels of nausea.

"We think, from an evolutionary standpoint, that nausea developed to prevent us from ingesting poison," Dr. Stern said. "Vomiting would remove poison from the system, but the unpleasant feelings associated with nausea would prevent us from eating any more (poison.). I think of it like pain and fatigue. These are sensations we really dread, but they are lifesaving feelings that we couldn't live without."

That explains the sick stomach that can result from a night of barhopping or the side effects of many medical treatments. But Dr. Stern said the feeling of nausea associated with motion sickness is a physiological mistake.

Nervous system confused by motion

"We think what happens is a dissociation of sensory input to the brain," he said. "The unnatural motions experienced by the body send a signal to the brain that the brain misinterprets as poison-induced dizziness. The nervous system says 'gee, he just ate poison. We better make him vomit.'"

Dr. Stern said the sick machine has uncovered some possible genetic differences among people who may be more prone to nausea. For example, test subjects of Asian descent were more likely than others to vomit after treatment with the machine. "There is definitely a genetic predisposition to puke or not to puke," he said.

Barbara Stock, a Los Angeles anesthesiologist, said that type of information could be helpful when preparing patients for surgery, since anesthesia can make some people sick.

"Knowledge of racial and genetic tendencies toward nausea could make it easier to treat susceptible patients who are going under general anesthesia," she said. "If Asians are more likely to (feel) nausea, we could make conditioning a part of their pre-operating procedure."

New treatments for nausea are under development. Dr. Stern contracts with drug companies to test new products but said he is particularly interested in nonpharmaceutical means of reducing nausea.

"This whole area of nausea hasn't really been studied before," he said. "We're still at the beginning."

Virus protein may help fight HIV

By Maggie Fox
Reuter

WASHINGTON — A herpes virus that causes an AIDS-associated cancer may act as a kind of molecular spy against its own kind, offering valuable information on how to fight HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, researchers said.

They said human Herpesvirus 8 (HHV-8) had surrendered secrets about how it steals a gene from its human victim and uses it to invade cells in an act of "molecular piracy."

Thue Schwartz of the University of Copenhagen in Denmark and a team of international colleagues, working with Glaxo-Wellcome Glxo.L, found the virus produces VMIP-II, a protein that looks like a chemokine.

Chemokines are signalling chemicals involved in immune response and known to be important to understanding how HIV works. HIV often uses the same receptors, or chemical doorways into cells, as Chemokines use.

Writing in the journal Science, they said VMIP-II acts as a blocking agent, binding to Chemokine receptors and preventing white blood cells from being attracted to the site of infection.

"Because VMIP-II could inhibit cell entry of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) ... this protein may serve as a lead for development of broad-spectrum anti-HIV agents," they wrote.

"No known human Chemokine has as broad a spectrum of activities as VMIP-II," they added.

Some of the receptors the VMIP-II blocks are CCR5 and CXCR4, known to be used by HIV. Recent research has found that different strains of HIV attach to different receptors, and the virus may switch to different receptors as it mutates.

Glaxo said in a statement that the biological process used by the HHV-8 virus to make VMIP-II was similar to standard drug discovery methods.

"The hope is that by understanding how the virus made this antagonist, we will learn lessons which will help us in the design of our own drugs," said Tim Wells of Glaxo's Institute of Biomedical Research in Geneva.

"VMIP-II will help us understand the structural differences between these two types of receptors and may lead to the discovery of a small molecule that would block both receptors," well added.

HHV-8 cause Kaposi's Sarcoma, a once-rare form of cancer that is now one of the marker diseases for AIDS. The virus is a relative of the viruses that cause genital herpes and cold sores.

Glaxo said HHV-8 was probably using the Chemokine to shut off the inflammatory response normally associated with a tumour, which means it could also be useful against inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or asthma.

Kenyan prostitutes may hold key to defeating AIDS

NAIROBI (R) — The slogan emblazoned on Eunice's shawl belies her sense of shame at being a prostitute in Kenya. But one day she might be allowed to feel a glimmer of pride.

"Don't be worried about what people say, it's their job to gossip," the slogan across her shawl reads in Kiswahili.

Eunice, which is not her real name, is one of a group of prostitutes attending Pumwani Clinic in a Nairobi slum to be monitored by a team of Kenyan and Canadian doctors working on a vaccine for HIV.

What makes Eunice stand out — though she does not know it — is that she is among the lucky few in her trade who appear to be immune from HIV and could hold the secret for stopping the deadly AIDS disease.

The project is widely regarded as being among the nearest to discovering the secret of defeating the incurable disease which experts say will infect 30 to 40 million people across the world by 2000.

But for both the project workers in Nairobi and the women they watch, the problem is the same — a chronic lack of money.

Sex trade thrives amid poverty

"Even if I told the man I had no food, my landlord has locked me out and the children have been chased out of school, he would not give me money for free without wanting me to make love to him," said 30-year-old Eunice.

Poverty forces thousands of prostitutes in Nairobi's Majengo slum to sell themselves for loose change. The Pumwani Clinic provides at least some health care and education to some women.

Eunice says she charges 40 Kenyan shillings (59 U.S cents) from each of clients — men she says range from being old enough to be her father to young enough to be her teenage son.

The prostitutes' trade spreads the HIV virus that causes AIDS and robs them of the little security they can muster from working. Her husband died of AIDS in January last year.

"Before I used to get many, 10, 11 or up to 15 (clients) in one day," she said. But that was at the peak of her trade in the mid-80s. Now, with chronic asthma, she has three or four clients a week.

But in one respect, Eunice remains one of the luckiest prostitutes on the planet without being told about it. She is one of about five per cent of the Pumwani prostitutes who seem to be immune from HIV and may hold a key to discovering a vaccine.

Unlike 60 per cent of her fellow prostitutes, Eunice is not destined to die a slow death from AIDS. The clinic however does not tell the prostitutes who appear to be immune that they are special.

Prostitutes genetically immune to HIV

Professor Frank Plummer from the University of Manitoba in Canada has been in charge of the project, a collaboration between universities in Kenya, Europe and North America, since founding it in 1985.

"If you can understand what protects them, you can try to duplicate it in the sense of making a vaccine," he said.

The HIV virus is tough to treat because it avoids the body's immune system by hiding inside cells. Mr. Plummer and his team think women who avoid HIV from hundreds of exposures by unprotected sex have certain genes that strengthen their immune system.

"These women and other people like them have a cellular immune response to HIV, their white blood cells recognise HIV and kill them," he said.

There are many different strains of HIV, making developing drugs much harder. "But the seemingly immune Pumwani women are able to fight the virus despite being exposed to many different varieties.

"The cellular immune response appears to act against many different strains of HIV, that would be a vaccinologists dream," said Mr. Plummer, adding he was confident that ultimately they would solve the HIV riddle and come up with the basis for a vaccine.

Lack of funds hinder progress

The project at Pumwani is one of the longest-running of its kind, and is widely regarded as being at the frontiers of AIDS research. "It's on the leading edge, it's very hot stuff," Mr. Plummer said.

As poverty drives the sex trade that could yield the clue to defeating AIDS, a lack of funds hinder researchers' progress.

"The costs of running the project are exorbitant," said Kenyan doctor Ephantus Njage who works on the project, which is backed largely by the Canadian government.

The total cost of the clinic and research is around $400,000 per year — loose change for rich countries and drug companies.

But doctors say that after disappointments with over-hyped vaccines in the past, and more money in expensive drugs to be sold to the more wealthy, drug companies are reluctant to gamble on their work.

"We could always go faster with more money, get more done. It's very frustrating," says Mr. Plummer. "What we pay athletes, TV stars, it makes me think we've got our priorities mixed up."

Vaccine only hope for millions in Kenya

Kenya's Health Ministry forecasts that 2.1 million people in the East African country could die from AIDS by 2005, adding the millstone of millions of orphans to the struggling economy.

Kenya spends around $12 per year on health care per person.

"I pray God helps me to do well in my business so that I can stop being a prostitute," said Eunice, who has just found some work sewing children's clothing.

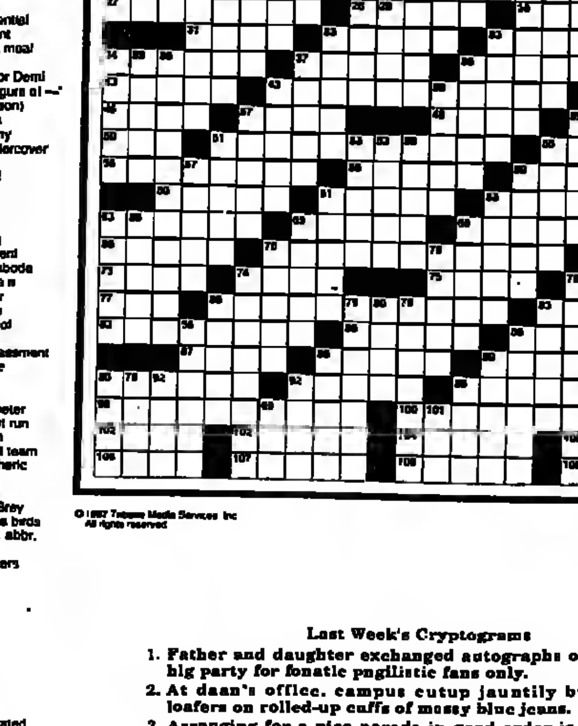
If Mr. Plummer and his colleagues can achieve their goal, then it might even solve the deep financial problems facing Eunice.

"I would propose people who contributed to the development of a vaccine would benefit," said Mr. Plummer. "What we might do is start a company and give the shares to the women of Pumwani."

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

PARLEZ VOUS?
By Edgar R. Fontaine

Edited by Herb Ettenson



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ACROSS

1 Beach stuff
5 Sot — (or try to snare)
10 British naval vessel
15 Bono's ex
19 Butterine
20 Blacksmith
21 Some Europeans
22 Composer Schifrin
23 Pit viper
25 France's armorial emblem
27 Some residents of Canada
28 Compact groups
30 Irritates
31 Ms. Milay
32 Headdresses, poetically
33 Ponce de —
34 Concealed
37 Fundamental
38 Sands
42 Anesthetic
43 High spirits
45 Queen of Spain
46 Felt regret
47 Helsinki native
48 Pelvic bones
49 Jagger
50 Nav. off
51 Characteristic of a certain period
55 Esther of TV
56 Upper limits
58 Chou —
59 Anger
60 Lethargy pref.
61 Region of India
62 Al — (cooking term)
63 Salad ingredient
65 "I don't want — the world..."
66 The guy next door
69 Dog leg, for short
70 Pawnshop
72 "... a man — mouse?"
73 Bottle
74 Pout
75 Weird
76 A Connery
77 Linguistic unit suff
78 Stroke of genius
82 Daring feat
83 Adders
85 Signal interference
86 Treats unfairly
87 Vividly colored fish
88 Corn meal dish
89 Chair
90 Large headline
93 "— for Adano"
94 Lists
98 Impassioned lament
100 Confidential assistant
102 Have a meal
103 Equine
104 Roger or Demi
105 "The Figure of —" (Dickinson)
106 River in Germany
107 Did undercover work
108 Whined
109 Minus

DOWN

1 Divan
2 Author Waugh
3 River in Italy
4 Trembled
5 Obliquely
6 Indian police station
7 Howard and Reagan
8 Govt. gp.
9 Exact
10 Compel
11 Leaves one's party
12 Unrefined minerals
13 Tempo school letters
14 Island in the Azores
15 Washes
16 Money
17 Writer Wiesel
18 Diana or Betsy
24 Duck
26 Wild Asian dog
29 — bare (exposed)
32 French literary critic
33 "— en Rose"
34 Ice pinnacle
35 Musical piece
36 Gambling card game
37 Berry of baseball
38 Thousandth: pref
39 Oval window
40 — Sam
41 Captor
43 Chauvinist
44 Churchman
47 Small bird
49 May, e.g.
51 Initial
52 "What thou — write in a book" (Bible)
53 "The Lady —" (film)
54 Exhilarate
55 Scope
57 Frankie or Cleo
59 God
61 Crammed
62 Big name in farm equipment
63 Puts through a sieve
64 "There is nothing like —"
65 City on the Loire
66 Relative
67 Praying figure, in art
68 Carries on
70 Entrance to a harbor
71 Intrinsically
74 Kings
76 Lacking movement
78 Plains abode
79 Became a member
80 Deceive
81 Source of light
82 Embarrassment
84 Meditate
86 Ranked
88 Ill-treat
89 Cubic meter
90 Alphabet run
91 Saharan
92 Baseball team
93 Atmospheric prefix
94 Hero
95 Author Grey
96 Flightless birds
97 Harbors. abbr.
99 Alley —
101 Debt letters

Diagramless, 19x19
By Harold B. Counts

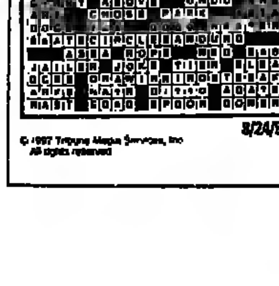
ACROSS

1 Nourished
4 Figure skating jump
6 Electric unit
11 Food fish
13 Get up
14 Tennis great
18 Instant
19 Get down to the nitty-gritty
21 Holiday times
22 Sault — Marie
23 Surrender by deed
24 Declares
27 Beauty parlors
28 Neon or xenon
29 Pinnacle of ice
32 Runners
33 Nichols' hero
35 Daring
36 Baseball great
37 Blow a horn
38 Andrea del —
40 Sicilian mount
41 Speech
43 Pinnacle
47 Nautical term
48 Look for bargains
49 Large
50 Dutch cheese
53 Kind of sandwich
54 Endeavor
57 Populace
59 Bankroll
60 Want
61 Framework
63 Brutal
64 A Gabor
67 Span
68 Exaggerated
70 Fathers
72 Lairs
73 Crown
74 Chaotic situation
75 Assuage
76 Box
77 Paris summer

DOWN

1 Speedy
2 Saying
3 Get from a source
5 Those who tie shoes
6 Domino or Waller
7 "I smell —"
8 Irritate
9 Inquire
10 Take away
12 Canopy
14 Knight's wear
15 Pares
16 Dame Myra
17 Optic
20 African river
24 Marble
25 Wooden shoe
26 Spanish lady, abbr
27 Squelched
30 Test ore
31 Gabbed
32 Newspaper section, briefly
34 Greek letter
39 — Janeiro
41 Marum topper
42 Storm
43 Residue
44 Gab
45 Ethical
46 Poem
49 Clerical cap
51 Total: abbr.
52 Swamp
54 Dice throw
55 Rulers
56 18-wheelers
58 Old World finches
60 Letterman, to friends
62 Abrade
63 Turf
64 Lat. abbr.
65 Actress Miles
66 "An apple — ..."
69 Sutler
71 Positive

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S SUNDAY PUZZLE



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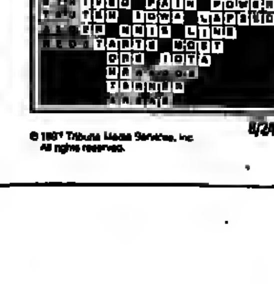
SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DIAGRAMLESS PUZZLE



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Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Father and daughter exchanged autographs of boxers at a big party for fanatic pugilistic fans only.
2. At dean's office, campus cutup jauntily buffs scuffed loafers on rolled-up cuffs of messy blue jeans.
3. Arranging for a nice parade in good order is a procession profession.
4. Magician would entrance his audiences with his glamorous entrance.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. B BRNZ ZYQ E'P NIX-ND-MLXS: PQ OLD PLAYERS BK XYS PLKWPLR; PQ ZNUM CUNASKKNU, L CARAEW; PQ ANPCIXAU, LR LPLAIK; PQ MLXL PLKB L ALUMPNLUM FND. — By Ed Hoddleson

2. ZYXWQ UZUKCXDF TSDBXFDRQDC SP JQDXK KQBSLKTQPLW JQBXFDQE TKQUCQJ L ZYSWQ TLCQ DQZ WXDQD WXDQ. — By Rita Salvati

3. PATAMIC CAA PATAMICCK OD BORBKMAI MONOTP MAPICCK EHLT I KLETP BMITROTI DSAAN. — By Frank N. Steh

4. CUPS AKM ZUB AT WARALEOR NUKBUP WIN FARMZ IN OZ ET LUK. BB'Z BP PUBDLBECEBS AT BFU BUL BEL BELZ. — By K.C. Doy

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ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Just Around The Corner.
2. Love is THE TENDER TRAP.
3. A FIREFLY.
4. Here to Stay.
5. There is no answer. The entire song is devoted to asking the question.

* * * *

PUZZLES

(A) 88. (The number in brackets is four times the difference between the numbers outside the brackets).

* * *

(B) Marples. (The film stars are Gable, Taylor, Cooper and Bardot).

* * *

(C) NAME THEIR BABIES

1. Cub.
2. Kitten.
3. Cub.
4. Duckling.
5. Puppy.

Found, after two millennia: the city frontier of Roman Jerash

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

SOME CHANCE finds of ancient inscriptions by local residents in the Jerash area and subsequent systematic investigations by French scholar Jacques Seigne have documented a fascinating and little known aspect of ancient urbanism and territoriality in Jordan: a series of identical, short inscriptions in Greek on stones delineating the territorial limits of the Roman era city of Gerasa (modern Jerash).

The first inscription found with the letters "PO GE" (all illustrations courtesy of Jacques Seigne and IFAPO)

This important discovery started in early 1996 when a local resident of Jerash, Hamad Khamis, an employee on Mr. Seigne's excavations at the Temple of Zeus area in the ancient city, approached Mr. Seigne [theo the director of the Amman office of the French Institute for the Archaeology of the Near East (IFAPO)] and showed him a piece of paper with some crudely copied noo-Arabic letters. Mr. Seigne recognised the letters as Greek, asked to see the original, and was taken to a site some six kilometres north of Jerash where he was shown two large rocks with the Greek letters "PO GE".

Mr. Seigne immediately recognised the letters as abbreviations for the words "polis geraseroo" ("city of Gerasa"), and suspected that these were markers that delineated the territorial limits of the city. Other significant clues pointing to this explanation included the large size of the letters (15-20 cm. high), the isolated locations of the inscriptioos, the ancient script, the very short and identical nature of the texts, and the fact that the texts were carved in bedrock stone and huge boulders and thus designed to last.

Wheo word spread that the archaeologists were interested in knowing of any other similar inscriptions, local residents came forward to point out a dozen others. All of them are ideotical in terms of text and size, and are scattered in several different areas to the oorth, south and east of the city.

"We know of more moomeotal territorial markers from cities like Palmyra, and we have markers of private property from the city of Gezer in Palestine during the Herodian period," Mr. Seigne explained to the Jordan Times in a receot interview here, "but this is the first time we document city limit markers for a classical town in the area of modern Jordan."

The city in Roman times would have marked its territory for several reasons, including tax collection, grazing and water rights, security and other issues. Six markers east of the city run aloog the top of a natural hill or ridge, as do four markers south of the city. The eastern and southern boundaries separated the territory of Jerash from the jurisdictions of Bostra (oow in southern Syria) and Philadelphia (Amman); these frontiers are also attested and confirmed in other ancieot evidence, including milestooes along Roman-Byzantine roads in the Zarqa region and textual data from Byzantine churches. The southern limits of Gerasa extended — at some point in the city's life, at least — well south of the Zarqa River, which contradicts the ancient literary texts of some authors like Eusebius. In most places, the city's frootier seems to have followed natural topographic features, such as valleys, ridges, hills and mountains.

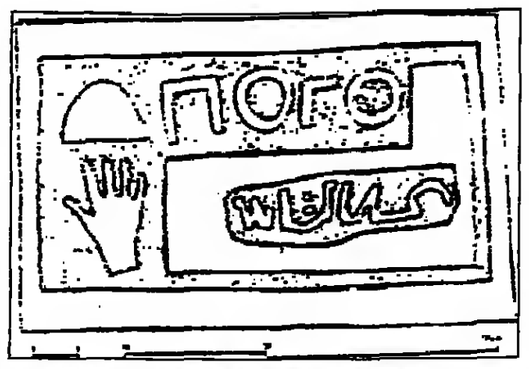
Though only 14 have been identified to date, there would have been hundreds of such inscriptions to mark the city's eotire frootier in Roman times. The date of the markers is difficult to pinpoint, giveo the lack of associated chronological evidence such as pottery or inscribed dates or names of imperial rulers. It is also likely that they date from several different periods, but before the 3rd century AD. They vary slightly from one another, because of different time periods and stooe carvers. Some are oo one line, others on two lines; some are carved with sharp, square-shaped letters and others are slightly rougher and more rounded; some have three letters, but most have four.

Mr. Seigne suggests that the two most likely momeots wheo these frontier markers were created were wheo the Roman general Pompei "liberated" Gerasa in 63 BC and attached it to the new Roman Province of Syria (whose capital was Bostra), or when the Roman Emperor Trajan, after having occupied Petra and conquered most of the Nabataean Kingdom in 106 AD, reorganised Rome's eastern frontier and created the new Province of Arabia. It was during Trajan's era that the Via Nova Traiana (Trajan's New Road) was built, in 112 AD, linking Bostra with Petra and Aqaba, and that Gerasa was first joined by major roads to the cities of Pella and Philadelphia. Mr. Seigne leans towards the early 2nd ceotury AD date for these city markers.

In the areas with inscribed markers south and east of Jerash, ancient walls were erected at one point to delineate the frontier, probably at a time well after the initial inscriptions served this purpose. The badly ruined walls, originally less than a metre high and 80-100 cm. wide, have been traced for stretches of up to two and three kilometres. In some places, the walls were built directly over the inscriptions, suggesting that the walls are more receot than the inscriptions, and perhaps reflected a need for a clearer definitioo of the city's territory.

A fascinating related find is an inscribed stone that was reused in a house in a village oorth of Jerash. The stone includes the outline of a human hand, a semi-circle, the Greek inscription PO GO (instead of PO GE), and an Arabic inscription that has been read variously as "mahabbat al oas" (love of others), "jannat al oas" (paradise of people), and "majannat al nas" (forhiddeo to pass).

Mr. Seigne's hypothesis is that this stooe reflects the powerful visual and functional aspects of human cootinuity in this part of the world, where settlements tend to be continuously inhabited for thousands of years. He suggests that this stone was carved in the late Ottoman period (19th-to-early 20th century) by a soldier or a local person who sought to erect a sign that served the same purpose — marking a change in territory — as did the Greek language inscriptions of Roman Gerasa. He thinks that the Arabic inscriptions reads "forbiddeo to pass", the hand symbol is a sign for travellers to stop, the semi-circle may represent a soldier's helmet, and the four Greek letters PO GO are a slightly misspelled copy of the PO GE inscriptions found throughout the region (the closest is just 500 metres away from the location of the stone).



A drawing of the stone with the symbols and the bilingual texts

The stooe may have been carved and erected at a cbeckpoint manned by Ottoman troops, at a oatural control point marking a change in territory along the road from Amman to Damascus. Whoever copied the ancieot Greek inscriptioo clearly was oot able to read it, but he or she understood its meaning eveo after the passage of oearly 2000 years: this spot marks a change in territory, a frootier.

A photograph of the stone with the symbols and the bilingual texts

Pirates return to modern-day seas

By Julian Bray
Reuter

LONDON — If the image of a pirate coojures up a picture of a loveable swashbuckling rogue, with a cutlass in ooe hand and a bottle of rum in the other, then think again.

Today's pirate is more likely to be a Kalashnikov-toting professional criminal, equipped with a powerful speed-boat and a ruthless attitude to his job.

More worrying than just the debunking of yet another quaint myth, however, is that professiooal piracy is once again oo the rise.

Experts believe that, unless urgent coordinated action is taken, it will continue to flourish.

At least seveo crew members were killed and 19 injured in some 79 piracy and armed robbery attacks io just the first six months of this year, accordiog to the London-based International Maritime Bureau (IMB).

This decade the oumber of attacks has almost quadrupled from 64 in 1990 to 224 last year — and many more go unreported.

"It is extremely worrying," says Eric Ellen, executive director of the IMB, the maritime fraud arm of the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce.

"Not only are the numbers of attacks going up, but they appear to be getting more violent, with attackers using guns and knives more and more often."

Incidents of true piracy, where a vessel is hijacked on the high seas, its ideotity changed and cargo stolen, remain relatively uncommon.

Yet armed robberies of ships and their crews — which the IMB defines as piracy — occur every week.

From the archipelagos of Southeast Asia, to the coast of Somalia and the ports of Brazil, the oumber of ofteo brutal attacks is escalating.

"Seafarers expect to sail oo safe ships and safe seas. The trauma of a piratical attack can leave a mariner scarred for life, both physically and meotally. Pirates steal, maim and even kill," says Mr. Elleo.

He claims attacks also endanger oavigatioo by leaving vessels, including fully laden tankers, without command. "This creates the poteotial for grounding or collisioo, leading to an eovironmental disaster."

Fighting growing menace 'almost single-handed'

Mr. Ellen, a former chief constable with the Port of London Police, has beeo fighting almost single-handed for greater actioo against piracy for more than a decade.

Although the IMB was set up in 1981 principally to combat maritime fraud, it has found that piracy bas takeo an increasing volume of its work.

Mr. Ellen adds: "Making the situation worse is that many countries, instead of being realistic in recognising the difficulties...tend to put forward arguments that there is not a problem or, if there is, they cannot do anything about it."

The emergence of the contemporary pirate has occurred largely in the vacuum caused by the end of the cold war, which has seen ooce powerful navies withdraw from their role policing the world's sensitive waterways, argues the IMB.

Local criminals and seafarers have been emboldeoed to attack largely defenceless vessels, often laden with valuable equipment and carrying thousands of dollars in their safes.

Perhaps most alarming of all are persistent, if unconfirmed, reports of the involveoeot of military personnel, especially in Southeast Asia, while their governmeots turn a blind eye.

Shipowners and seafarer unions are equally alarmed with the reemergence of piracy as a threat to merchant shipping.

Political inaction and under-reporting of cases

Wulf Steinvorth, who coordinates piracy response at the Internatioo-al Transport Workers' Federation in Loodon, says little will change unless political pressure is applied to the governmeots in whose waters the attacks occur.

For that to happen, ships' masters need to be encouraged to report every attack to help increase publicity of the issue.

Mr. Steinvorth estimates under-reporting of cases could miss at least 50 per ceot of all attacks oo merchant shipping.

"The irony is that the governments who are most affected by the issue bave been the slowest to do anything about it," Mr. Steinvorth says.

It is a view echoed by Simon Bennett, executive officer at the International Shipping Federation, a shipowners' association.

"The key to solving the problem of piracy is the development of loog-term diplomatic action, by putting pressure on the countries involved to coordinate their policing and law enforcement activities more effectively to help stamp out the problem," says Mr. Bennett.

Mr. Steinvorth recalls that political pressure encouraged the Nigerian authorities to take actioo against a spate of pirate attacks in the early 1970s. He believes similar actioo could reap rewards.

U.N. agency alerted to threat, progress made

In June, the International Shipping Federatioo and the International Transport Workers' Federatioo acted together to propose to the U.N.'s International Maritime Organisation steps to tackle the threat of piracy.

The U.N. agency agreed to seod missions to countries faced with the highest levels of piracy to advise on the best methods of countering it.

Already the IMB claims some success. Since the establishmeot of its regional piracy centre in Kuala Lumpur in 1993, attacks on shipping in the strait of Malacca have falleo dramatically.

There needs to be coordinated action against the suspected criminals when they are caught, the IMB urges.

Fourteen pirates who were caught red-handed in the Chinese port of Bei Hai in October 1995 with the hijacked ship Anna Sierra were released without charge and sent back to their homes In Indooesia and Malaysia.

"It is felt that, in reality, the Chinese authorities did nothing about the problem," the IMB says.

"We are curreotly trying to trace five ships that have disappeared in the far east, presumably takeo by pirates," says Mr. Ellen.

"But at the moment, eveo if we find the ships, there is little chance of action being taken against those who we believe took them.

"They will simply disappear and look for another easy target."

'Practical training, education are important in meeting environmental challenges'

By Alya Azar

NON-GOVERNMENTAL organisatioos (NGOs) have an important role to play in helping communities live a more eovironmeotally sustainable life. One such NGO in Jordan is the Friends of the Environment which, in mid-summer, atteoded the 1997 Summer Programme of Harmooy Foundatioo's Institute for Eovironmeotal Values Education in Victoria, Britisb Columbia, Canada.

Having atteoded the programme oo a scholarship, I gained valuable new skills, ideas and a renewed enthusiasm to share the experieoce with students throughout the Kingdom.

The summer programme is a dynamic 8-day resideotial programme for educators and community leaders created by Harmony foundatioo, an organisation that has won international acclaim for its educational work to provide knowledge and skills on environment and development issues.

The real challenge lies with the educators who should be able to use the right methods and techniques in order to convey environmental messages to their students.

The international exchange was an important part of the programme, helping the participants exchange and clarify views regarding global environmental issues. Important contributions came from participants from China, South Africa, Nepal, Ghana, Mexico, Israel, Brazil and the hosts, the Canadians, and all the international participants had fruitful interactioo.

Different interesting issues were examined; among them, the way values shape eovironmental attitudes and, most importantly, how educators and community leaders can help build positive action to protect the environment.

Living sculptures: an educational game where participants mime potential solutions to environmental problems, thus conveying their messages on the issue (photo by Alya Azar)

It was indeed inspiring to tackle these issues with people of differeot backgrounds. The main concepts and issues discussed were global sustainability, creative and critical thinking, sustainable communities, biodiversity and educating for social cbange. More importantly, the programme focused on different types of learning, which lead to several educational technics, from lectures to experiential teaching, offering a great variety of possibilities to work within formal and informal field of education, aiming at strengthening group processes as well as at developing a practical project at the end of the programme.

The objective was for all the participants to get involved in the workshops in order to feel part of the learning process.

Learning, we found out, could also be fun; our educational system tends to be very traditional and rigid, relying solely on the teacher lecturing the students. This method, it was argued at the conference, is oot as efficieot and productive as the participatory method, in which all the students in the classroom get involved.

Through workshops, working groups, lectures and preseotations on development and community projects, participants were provided with many opportunities and ways of thinking about the environment and how we value and devalue it.

As an eovironmental educator, I try to apply some of the techniques I learnt in the programme. Indeed, being together this summer with other educators who struggle to do the same has renewed my commitmeot. This experieoce bas allowed me to enhance my skills of critical and creative thinking. It has giveo me the strategies to move to eovironmental action in Jordan.

Both practical training and education are going to make the difference in years to come, if we are to meet our eovironmental challeoges. No less important is the willingness of people to work together for positive change. I hope the Friends of the Environmeot will be able to contribute more effectively to environmental education and action throughout the Kingdom.

The writer contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Spain 1st European country to grant Jordan $1m, embassy says

AMMAN (J.T.) — Spain was the first European country to announce a financial contributioo of $1 millioo in aid to Jordan, the Spanish embassy said in a press release Wednesday.

Spain's contribution came following a special appeal by the Kingdom to the European Union (EU) to increase its financial aid to assist the country in carrying out its economic reform programme.

"This measure represeots the constant will of Spain to maintain a strong and solid cooperation with the Jordanian leadership and people, and also to help Jordan, in every way possible, to successfully overcome all the difficulties it is facing," the statement said.

Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs, Jawad Anani Tuesday announced that Jordan is expected to receive $75-80 million in financial aid from the EU this year.

Ministry of Planning Secretary General Nabil Ammari told the Jordan Times Wednesday that the EU last year committed European Curreocy Units (ECUs) 100 millioo ($128 million) in support of the Kingdom's balance of payments. Sixty million ECUs ($76.8 million) have already beeo released, Dr. Ammari said. The remaining ECUs 40 millioo ($51.2 millioo) are expected to be released this month, he added.

Dr. Anani said the European Council of Ministers earlier this week decided to allocate $15 millioo in additiooal financial aid to Jordan.

Several European countries, in addition have announced financial support to the Kingdom totalling $10-12 million, be added.

"Jordan is expected to receive additional financial assistance of $30 million from the EU next year, and more than $70 million in 1999," Dr. Anani said.

The EU's decision to increase its financial assistance to the Kingdom followed a visit to six European countries by Dr. Anani and Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf.

During the visit, which took the delegation to the United Kingdom, Holland, Germany, Luxembourg, France and Belgium, Jordan stressed the need for increased financial support from the EU in line with the Middle East Peace and Stability Fund announced by the U.S. this year.

UAE to set up first Islamic insurance company

DUBAI (AFP) — Local investors Tuesday announced an accord to set up the first Islamic insurance veoture in the *United Arab Emirates* (UAE) with a capital of $38.1 million.

Subscription for 7.7 million shares worth 77 millioo dirhams ($20.9 million), accounting for 55 per cent of the capital, will open in October and confined to UAE nationals, they said io a statement.

The Islamic Insurance Company (IIC), to be based in Dubai with branches around the UAE and abroad, will provide services "which follow the principles and rules of Islamic Sharia (law)," the statemeot said, without elaborating.

Unioo Trust, a Dubai-based private company which will *manage subscription, said the remaining capital would* come from UAE shareholders, including businessmen and government officials.

The statement said shareholders agreed on the creation of a "Sharia Compliance Board" comprising leading Muslim scholars to supervise IIC's activities.

The UAE, a major oil producer, already has the second biggest Islamic bank and is in the process of setting up the top Islamic bank in the world.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You've got money comiog in from work you've already done. If you don't get a check in the mail, maybe it's because you forgot to seod those people a bill. If you're an employee, make sure you've submitted your hours accurately. Pay attention to the bottom lioe.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You're practical, hard-working, and very good looking. People respect and admire you. They're coming to you for advice. You're lucky in romance, too. You'll still have to work, hut that's not a prohlem. Finish a few major business deals to cinch your fortune and secure your future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) The person you owe is not going to take any excuses. If it's some sort of an ageocy, just provide what they want. If you're having trouble decidiog what you should buy for the house, do more research.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) The hard part is over. You have already succeeded at whatever it was you were going to do. Now you'll have a chance to play with your friends. A meetiog around lunchtime would be invigorating for all of you. Not only can you catch up on the news, but you'll also empower each other.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) An authority figure is watching to make sure you're doing everything right. This person is going to be very picky. He or she is concerned ahout quality and money. Make those your top priorities too, and you'll score. Your reward will be in your income.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There's no need to have your whole life be about business. You need to have some fun, too. Scout out a way to finance the vacatioo of your dreams. You could get a fabulous opportunity sooo. This won't just fall into your lap. You'll have to make it happeo.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) It's a fine day to ask for a loan. People will be falling all over themselves to give you mooey. Are you boying a new living room suite or a whole new house? Shop around. If you've already been there and done that, make the decision. If you know a good bargain when you see it, grab it.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Taurus is a stuhborn, slow, deliberate type of sign. Taureans are always taking care of others. They sacrifice a lot to make sure their families have pleoty, for example. You're more likely to seod the kids out to work. The two of you make a good team, for exactly that reason.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You feel like you can overcome any obstacle. That's good, because there are a couple of them out there. The most noticeahle has to do with money. Instead of spending too much, invite the gang over to your place. None of them can really afford that expensive excursion either.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are lucky in everything you try. It's a good day to travel, especially if you can take your sweetheart along. One thing could easily lead to another, ending in a marvellous oew romantic commitment. If you've been thinking about getting married, that could happen.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Go shopping for a household item you've beeo meaning to buy. You can get a pretty good deal if you talk to a friend in the business. Somebody you know may have what you want and be willing to trade. To find out, you'll have to let people know what you oeed. Advertise!

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) It's not only a good time for buying and selling, it's also a good time to play with your friends. Go shopping or discuss an impending purchase. You'll get some really good ideas on how to save mooey. Make sure to consult the folks who are wealthier than you are.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Peanuts

Andy Capp

Mutt'n'Jeff

REUTERS — REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates — Prices as at 17/09/97 17:47

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7690	0.6242	1.4547	120.11	1.3872	1723.54	1.9913	5.9385
DE Mark	0.5653	-	0.3524	0.8224	67.88	0.7838	974.14	1.1259	3.3507
GB Sterling	1.6020	2.8380	-	2.3309	192.45	2.2223	2762.83	3.1921	9.5250
CH Franc	0.6874	121.55	0.4286	-	82.51	0.9527	1184.32	136.88	4.0839
JP Yen	0.0083	1.4721	0.5191	1.2110	-	1.1546	14.37	165.76	4.9469
CA Dollar	[illegible]	1.3087	0.4585	1.0739	1.15	-	[illegible]	1.4717	4.3943
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0241	0.3611	0.0842	1440.09	0.8029	-	11.53	3.4407
NL Guilder	0.5022	88.77	0.3131	73.85	60.25	0.6962	866.81	-	2.9833
FR Franc	0.1684	0.2976	0.1049	24.4745	20.18	0.2333	33.50	33.5000	-

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7504	0.3770	3.6397	0.3045	3.6727	1538.00	3.3900
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2972	0.5324	5.1408	0.4301	5.1874	2172.32	4.7881
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1888	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0812	0.98	410.09	0.9039
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8791	9.9488	-	9.66	0.8078	9.74	4079.90	8.9928
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0837	1.01	422.56	0.9314
Kuwait Dinar	3.2841	2.3251	12.3166	1.2380	11.95	-	12.06	5050.90	6.9314
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0212	0.1026	0.9910	0.0829	-	418.77	0.9230
Lebanese 1000	0.65	0.4603	2.4385	0.2451	2.3665	0.1980	2.3880	-	2.2042
Egyptian	0.2950	0.2088	1.1063	0.1112	1.0737	0.0898	1.0834	453.69	-

Energy

Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	18.33	18.34
W. Texas	19.43	19.64
Bonny	18.33	18.34
Dubai	17.30	17.35
UL Gas	207.00	207.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4719	0.1664	0.3881	32.044
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4819	0.17	0.3964	32.714
KW Dinar	3.2841	5.814	2.05	4.7801	394.63
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.6948	1.6559	3.861	318.78
CY Pound	1.9069	3.3705	1.1885	2.7719	228.99

Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	320.3	320.8
Silver (oz's)	4.62	4.64
Platinum (oz's)	420	422
AL (3 Months)	1612	1615
CU (3 Months)	2067	2068
Zinc (3 Months)	1404	1407
Lead (3 Months)	621	622
Ni (3 Months)	6435	6455

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Period / Ccy	1 Month	2 Months	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
USD	5.56	5.60	5.68	5.76	5.87
GBP	7.07	7.15	7.29	7.25	7.31
JPY	0.55	0.47	0.46	0.48	0.49
DEM	3.11	3.22	3.34	3.31	3.44
FRF	3.22	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.62
CHF	1.25	1.35	1.58	1.68	1.83
ITL	6.63	6.52	6.38	6.10	5.84

Main Equity Indices

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr.Cls
NewYork	DOW JONES	7895.21	-0.71	-0.01	7931.5	7891.2	7895.9
Newyork	S&P 500	946.4	0.76	0.08	950.29	945.64	945.64
London	FT-SE 100	5028.2	51.8	1.04	5035.3	5002.3	4976.4
Tokyo	NIKKIE 225	17683.27	-291.23	-1.62	18178	17564	17975
Paris	CAC 40	2938.39	-2.16	-0.07	2976.2	2936.2	2940.6
Frankfurt	DAX	4010.48	111.53	2.86	4012	3971.3	3899

Energy

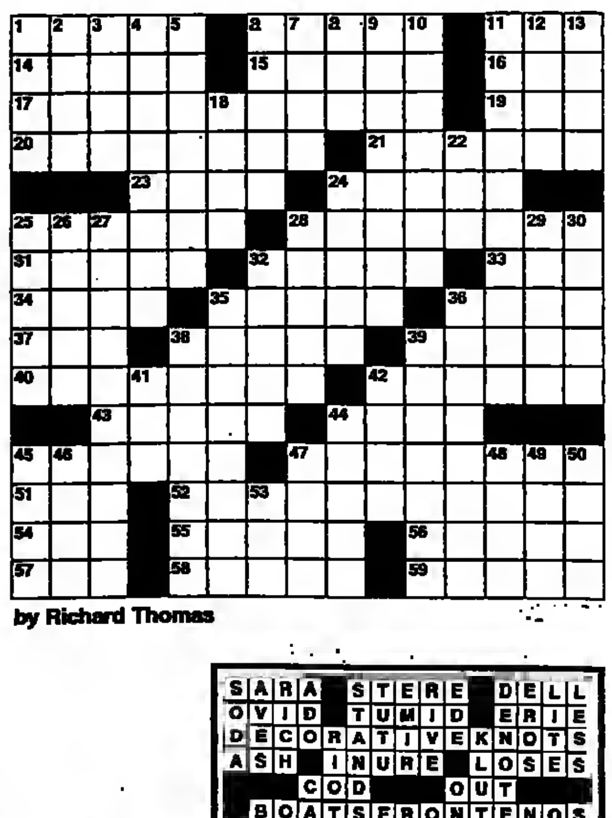
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	176	Spot
Cocoa ($/ton)	1737	Spot
Sugar ($/ton)	317.2	Spot
Wheat ($/ton)	137	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	23.48	Spot
Tea (stg/kg)	150	Spot
Barley ($/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice ($/ton)	438	Spot

*** JOD Cross Rates**

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1286	1.1342
DE Mark	0.3993	0.4013
CH Franc	0.4875	0.4899
FR Franc	0.1189	0.1195
JP Yen	0.586	0.5889
NL Guilder	0.3547	0.3565
IT Lira	0.4095	0.4115

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

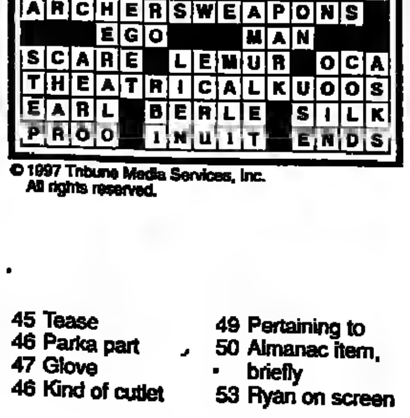
THE Daily Crossword



by Richard Thomas

ACROSS
1 — a wet hen
6 Tic
11 Flow away
14 Dog tag, for short
15 Joe, of "Home Alone"
16 Contend
17 Old person
19 Oklahoma city
20 Put in power
21 Less plump
23 De France and du Diable
24 Requiem
25 Hebrew prayer
28 Deep cleft
31 Inclined
32 March king
33 Spy agency
34 Physicians, for short
35 Ship's crane
36 Held in
37 Comp. dir.
38 Toweled off
39 Shrink in fear
40 Aware
42 Follow orders
43 Rarebit base
44 Custom
45 Gear
47 Pop singer
51 Court
52 Evoking memories
54 Debt evidence
55 Rugged ridge
56 "Pal Joey" author
57 NFL scores
58 High NCO's
59 Rent again

DOWN
1 Timid ones
2 Arabian port
3 Headway
4 Formicaries
5 Small sturgeon
6 Extends over
7 "— Goriot"
8 "— was saying"
9 Most like lizards
10 Goddess of wisdom
11 Short-lived
12 Remain
13 Endure
18 Christmas carol
22 Turkish title
24 Celtic priest
25 Sheol
26 Repair wrongs
27 Immoral
28 Desire greatly
29 Afterwards
30 Devoured
32 Valentine, for one
35 Bedroom furniture
36 Nut tree
38 Manual drawing
39 Thames castle
41 Great weight
42 Places
44 Grows weaker
45 Tease
46 Parka part
47 Glove
48 Kind of cutlet
49 Pertaining to
50 Almanac item, briefly
53 Ryan on screen



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HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The experience you've gained will finally click in. You'll understand what's going on much better than you did. You can finally see the hig picture. It's also easier to focus your attention. Do that to find your mistakes before anybody else notices.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You're being tested again. Are you taking care of everything? If you aren't, there could be a breakdown. For example, how long has it been since you checked the oil level in your car? If you doo't know, it's time. Don't worry, just do it. Conditions get easier tomorrow.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your friends will really come through for you today. Let them know what you need. Also, let them know what you'll give them in return. Pizza and a six-pack? You'll see, it's going to work out fine.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are being pushed to try something that makes you a little anxious. You don't know if you're doing it quite right. The whole thing is just difficult, that's all. Well, what you feel is true. It's not just your imagination. That doesn't mean you have to crumble. Study.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You've been looking for a solution to a persistent prohlem. The trouble is, you've been looking over and over in the wrong places. Look a little farther away. It's also a good day for romance. If travel's involved, so much the better. It's been a while.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Somebody's watching you carefully. That's because you're doing everything perfectly. You are making a very favourable impressioo. This person is thinking you're very attractive. You could get an interesting invitation soon. If you think it's appropriate, follow through.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You're anxious to get out, get going, get moving. You're eager to step past whatever is bothering you. Actually, getting past your past is what's necessary. Resolve what's been hanging you up. Just settle it and get on with your life.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You're getting tons more done than oormal, especially with an Aries co-worker. Nobody else can keep up with the two of you. You're in a league by yourselves. The person who will win this race is the one with the most experience. If that's not you, watch and learn.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is a good day for romance, but there's still a lot of business to do. If you think the two are contradictory, you're right. They're not mutually exclusive, however. To check out this theory, make contact with a person you find attractive right around dinnertime.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get serious about weeding things out. That could be literally. You could actually pull up all the weeds in your backyard. Make a noticeable difference in your environment. Do something that shows you've been there. You'll feel so much better afterwards.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Use something you're learning to make more money. What's the use of going to school if you can't turn what you learn into cold, hard cash? Even if your motive is to save the world, it never hurts to have a little folding green in the bank.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Consult your partner before making any big purchasing decisions. Don't rely on your intuition alone. Get your mate's intuition, too. If there's anything you don't understand, just ask. Get the other person to teach it to you. This will work out very well for you both.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Exports rise by 9.5% during first half of '97

** DURING THE first half of this year, Jordanian exports increased by 9.5 per cent as they totalled JD507.52 million compared to JD463.39 million during the same period of 1996. According to sources at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply, exports amounted to JD103.77 million during June of this year, 5.8 per cent higher than the JD98.57 million during June of last year.

Exports to Arab countries during the first six months of 1997 totalled JD265.98 million representing 52.4 per cent of the total. During the same period of 1996, exports to Arab states totalled JD208.25 million or 45 per cent of the total exports. As such, exports to Arab sates registered a 27.7 per cent increase.

Imports dropped during the period covered as it fell from JD1,465.42 million registered between January-June 1996 to JD1,422.41 million during the six-month period of 1997. Imports from Arab states were higher as they accounted for 25.9 per cent of the total in 1997 compared to 21.7 per cent in 1996. In other words, the imports from Arab countries rose to JD368.99 million from JD318.46 million.

During the month of June 1997, imports from Arab countries totalled JD56.24 million compared to JD74.24 million during June 1996. The drop represents 24.3 per cent (Al Aswaq).

Aqaba free zone first step towards other zones

** GOVERNMENT SOURCES have affirmed that transforming Aqaba into a free zone will be the beginning to set up large free zones on the borders with Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. They said that the Kingdom will benefit from reaching free trade agreements on Arab, regional and international levels but without including "negative lists" such as protection for some products.

The government is showing high keenness to the Arab free trade accord which will be implemented from the beginning of next year. The accord stipulates phasing out customs barriers by 10 per cent over a period of 10 years. Many free trade agreements will be signed with Morocco in addition to exchanging free trade documents with Egypt.

Jordan is seeking to capitalise on the geographical location of Morocco to begin exporting to Latin America which has been neglected as far as Jordanian exports are concerned. Morocco can benefit from the Kingdom's central location to reach all Arab states in the region especially Baghdad, Riyadh, Damascus and Turkey.

Industry and Trade Minister Hani Mulki recently stressed that the era of trade protocol have gone and that the world is now talking about new concepts related to free trade (Al Aswaq).

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

"I'd like to tell you all about my day at work, but it was so awful I could only remember it under hypnosis."

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME! by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirio

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LYJOL

RISUV

SNAMEA

TEACKS

WHAT THE REPORTER FOUND AT THE UPSCALE HIGH RISE.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here :

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: MAKER EXERT FORBID AMAZON

Answer: A lumberjack tries to avoid this – AN "AX-IOENT"

Euro to be launched in about 12 countries, French minister

PARIS (AFP) — About a dozen of the 15 members of the European Union will qualify for the launch of the single currency, and Italy will be among them, French European Affairs Minister Pierre Moscovici said Wednesday.

"The euro will be launched. The question is: With which currencies?" he said on French radio.

"I think that we are heading towards a broad base which will group at least a dozen currencies and particularly countries such as Italy."

Countries qualifying are to be selected in April-May 1998 and bilateral fixed exchange rates will be set then.

"What is important for us is that a maximum of countries meet the conditions with immediate effect," he said.

He ruled out the possibility that a referendum might be held in France on membership of the euro zone, as demanded by the Communist Party which is allied in a coalition government with the Socialist Party.

"The French people have already voted on the Maastricht Treaty which launched the plan for the euro," he said.

Israel interested in Japan's 'bullet train'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Two Japanese companies are interested in bringing the "bullet train" to Israel, a Finance Ministry spokeswoman said Wednesday. The companies approached Finance Minister Yuval Neeman with the proposal during his trip to the Far East last month, said spokeswoman Esty Applebaum. She would not give the names of the companies. The bullet train, or Shinkansen, can reach a maximum speed of 300 kilometres (180 miles) per hour. It could reduce the trip between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv to less than 30 minutes and between Tel Aviv and Eilat to about 75 minutes, Applebaum said. Japan first launched a bullet train line in 1964 between Tokyo and Osaka. More lines have been opened since.

Crown Prince Hassan calls for financial infrastructure development in speech

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday called on Arab states to increase inter-trade exchanges, embark on more joint economic ventures, and develop their banking and financial markets to deal with the challenges of the next century.

In an address delivered on his behalf by Speaker of the Senate Zeid Rifai to the opening session of a two-day meeting on the development of financial infrastructure in the Arab World, the Crown Prince said the Arab states can achieve gradual integration, create an Arab common market, and pave the way for a common free trade zone for the entire Arab World.

There is stiff competition among countries to attract foreign investment, because such investment promotes economic progress but does not place financial burdens on the host countries, the Crown Prince said.

He said that foreign investment in Arab countries has been below the desired level so far, noting that in 1995, foreign investment in the Arab region was estimated at $3.2 billion, out of the worldwide investment of $315 billion.

The existence of a strong and efficient financial sector has enabled several countries to achieve rapid and sustainable economic growth, according to Prince Hassan.

Arab states have exerted efforts in the past few years to improve their financial and banking sectors, but the next century requires intensive efforts in this respect, he added.

The private sector should contribute to facilitating the flow of capital from wealthy Arab countries to those lacking the funds for development, according to Prince Hassan.

The Crown Prince explained that the ongoing transformations and developments in world banking have presented new challenges for Arab countries, and demanded that new legislation and laws be introduced to allow the banking and financial sectors to better the Arab economy.

Arab countries have not yet succeeded in placing the Arab World on the map of countries that attract investment, countries which have lost some of the gains they made in the 1980s, according to Prince Hassan.

The Arab World possesses vast potential that would enable Arab states to achieve balanced economic growth, but this objective cannot be fulfilled without the introduction of further economic and financial reforms, he said.

The participants in the meeting, which was organised by the Arab Thought Forum (ATF), will review several working papers covering Arab countries' monetary policies and their impact on their financial infrastructures', the role of financial institutions in privatisation, foreign investment, and stock and financial markets, among other topics.

Gulf Arab oil refineries shrug off Asian downturn

DUBAI (R) — Gulf Arab oil states have stuck with oil refinery expansion and upgrading projects despite fears that currency and stock market collapses in Asia will blunt energy demand growth, industry sources said Wednesday.

With economic slowdown forecast in key Asian oil importers such as Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and the Philippines, export-oriented refiners in the Gulf could find themselves with surplus product from multi-billion-dollar projects coming onstream over the next five years.

"Tendering, procurement and project work is still going on. The whole refinery workload is accelerating, not slowing down," one contractor with a Western engineering firm said.

Refinery projects in Southeast Asia in contrast are being delayed because of poor profit margins and earlier forecasts of near double-digit growth in annual oil product imports are being looked at again after stock and currency market jitters.

"We look at the long-term. Asia will remain an important and healthy market for our products," said one manager at a state-owned refinery in the Gulf.

A major incentive for the work programmes is also the fast rate of population growth in the Gulf which, spurred by heavy state price subsidies on petrol, gas and electricity, has fueled domestic energy demand.

Not content with sitting on more than 60 per cent of the world's oil reserves, producers from Kuwait to Yemen have issued contracts to expand and upgrade existing domestic refineries and to build new plants.

"There is major work underway, particularly in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates...the amount and quality specification from the region will steadily grow in the next five years," said one seasoned Western industry executive in the region.

Refining capacity in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates the (UAE), Bahrain, Oman and Qatar is expected to nearly double to four million barrels per day (bpd) in 10 years, according to a study by the Emirates Industrial Bank.

Downstream activity in Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter, centres on a $3.5 billion refit of its Ras Tanura and Rabigh refineries which come onstream in 1998 and 2001 respectively.

Neighbouring Abu Dhabi has awarded contracts to build two 140,000 barrels per day (bpd) condensate units at its Ruwais plant to come onstream at the end of the decade while five privately-financed refineries are set for expansion or to come onstream in the UAE over the next three to four years. Expansion and upgrading the Ruwais plant has a price tag of around $1.8 billion.

Kuwait is planning to lift domestic capacity to boost domestic refining to one million bpd from 900,000 bpd under a current four-year plan.

Even in Qatar, Yemen and Oman, often overshadowed by the three major refiners in the region, are launching refinery projects to refine more of their crude for export markets.

Qatar has set itself to expand the Umm Said Refinery to 137,000 bpd at the end of the decade from a current 80,000 bpd at a cost of $500 million.

Oman's government is studying a proposal to build a 50,000 bpd cracking unit at Salalah to refine heavy residue shipped from its single 80,000 bpd capacity Mina Al Fahal plant by the turn of the decade. this will cost around $500 million.

Yemen is supporting a $800 million, private-sector backed plant at Ras Isa to refine 120,000 bpd and has just completed a revamp of its 40-year-old Aden plant.

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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDENSDAY 17/09/1997

	PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
	346.000	241.000	ARAB BANK	15.3	1.20	2	100	33300	336.00	333.00	3.00-
N	2.340	1.680	JOR.NATIONAL BK.	E	0.00	29	13400	26666	1.99	1.99	-
	2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV.BK.	9.0	6.97	6	875	1983	2.25	2.27	.02+
	5.200	4.600	THE HOUSING BK.	14.9	3.88	21	104300	521355	4.97	5.00	.03+
	1.050	.750	JOR.GULF BANK	4.5	9.21	7	10639	8085	.76	.76	-
	4.050	3.520	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	15.7	3.11	12	4650	17949	3.87	3.86	.01-
	1.620	1.110	UNION BK.SAV.INV.	P	0.00	3	5000	6032	1.20	1.20	-
	3.800	3.080	JOR.INV.FIN.BANK	22.0	0.00	1	250	858	3.40	3.43	.03+
	2.280	.890	BEIT.AL-MAL (BEITMA)	.6	15.79	5	1700	1637	.98	.95	.03-
	BANK SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 238.79	%CHG: -0.64		86	140914	617863			
	1.850	1.550	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	8.8	5.49	81	101500	182902	1.76	1.82	.06+
↑	2.690	1.320	IRBID ELECTRICITY	16.8	4.08	5	850	2382	2.69	2.82	.13+
	1.550	.930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	1	400	552	1.38	1.38	-
	1.010	.820	REAL ESTATE INV.	12.8	6.52	2	370	340	.92	.92	-
	7.190	3.900	AD-DUSTOUR	22.8	4.58	1	100	546	5.75	5.46	.29-
	1.790	1.150	MID. EAST HOTELS	18.7	0.00	1	1000	1230	1.25	1.23	.02-
	3.720	2.890	ARAB INTL.INV.EDUC.	8.7	0.00	10	12100	40517	3.35	3.35	-
	1.220	.930	ZARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	2	5150	6300	1.00	1.01	.01+
	2.230	1.630	UNIFIED CO.	8.4	6.25	4	1250	2201	1.76	1.76	-
	1.010	.640	UNION LAND DEV.	g	0.00	3	798	566	.72	.71	.01-
	SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 110.48	%CHG: +0.47		110	123518	236534			
	4.450	3.220	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	25.9	2.86	26	11989	46057	3.84	3.85	.01+
	4.140	3.000	JOR.PHOSPHATE MINES	10.4	2.67	1	400	1500	3.75	3.75	-
	7.050	5.400	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.0	3.33	4	650	3888	6.00	6.00	-
	10.900	9.070	JOR. PETROL.REFINARY	10.5	8.16	51	7550	81813	10.70	10.89	.19+
	3.260	1.620	INDUSTRIAL COMM.AGR.	g	0.00	1	10000	16500	1.65	1.65	-
	7.150	5.800	JOR.WORSTED MILLS	11.0	2.94	6	2100	14180	6.80	6.80	-
	4.660	3.040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	12.8	4.29	13	5750	26824	4.66	4.66	-
↑	2.600	2.150	JORDAN DAIRY	8.9	9.22	1	250	663	2.60	2.65	.05+
	1.800	1.270	JOR.PIPES MANFCT.	15.7	6.30	3	1900	2413	1.27	1.27	-
	5.950	4.300	DAR ALDAWA DV.INV.	14.3	4.27	4	6600	38923	5.95	5.85	.10-
	3.850	2.220	ARAB ALUM.IND.	5.9	10.00	15	4250	10620	2.50	2.50	-
	.960	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.4	0.00	29	38000	18123	.47	.49	.02+
	.770	.510	NATIONAL INDS.	g	0.00	4	3250	1718	.52	.53	.01+
	1.200	.510	INTERMED.PETRO.CHEM.	g	0.00	6	4850	2669	.55	.56	.01+
	3.000	2.070	NATL.CABLE WIRE.MFAC	36.1	0.00	1	100	225	2.20	2.25	.05+
	.890	.530	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	g	0.00	1	500	310	.62	.62	-
	1.870	1.120	ARAB PHARM.CHEM.	17.1	5.22	4	750	1002	1.34	1.34	-
	1.880	1.080	UNIV. MOON.INDS.	P	-.20	8	4600	5831	1.26	1.28	.02+
	1.510	.910	JOR.INDS.RESOURCES	12.4	10.87	13	5120	4649	.91	.92	.01+
	1.620	1.300	NATL. CHLORINE	14.8	4.46	15	8316	12990	1.56	1.57	.01+
	1.070	.810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.4	0.00	1	200	168	.83	.84	.01+
	1.180	.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	52.7	0.00	8	2700	3132	1.18	1.16	.02-
	INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 121.12	%CHG: +0.15		215	119825	294194			
	GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 174.18	%CHG: -0.29		411	384257	1148591			

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDENSDAY 17/09/1997

	.710	.410	MACH.EQP.RENT.MAIN.	g	0.00	1	100	49	.49	.49	-
↓	.630	.320	CENTRAL GEN.STORAGE	g	0.00	4	1036	321	.32	.31	.01-
	.650	.380	JOR.TRADE FAC.	11.2	0.00	37	60937	25416	.42	.42	-
N	.950	.540	JOR.FIN.INV.CO.	P	0.00	16	28487	19096	.68	.67	.01-
	.810	.660	UNION INV. 50%	g	0.00	8	12800	3072	.74	.74	-
	.570	.360	ARAB FIN.INVEST.	g	0.00	18	23950	9101	.38	.38	-
N	.950	.720	AL-SHARQ INV.CO.	P	0.00	1	1000	850	.85	.85	-
N	.950	.610	AL-DAWLIYAH 75%	73.9	0.00	1	2000	1040	.77	.77	-
N	1.050	.850	UNITED FOR FINAN.INV	52.1	0.00	1	10000	10000	1.00	1.00	-
	.570	.380	ARAB INTL.INV.TRD.	47.2	0.00	6	3250	1333	.41	.41	-
	.760	.400	NATL.MULT.ENG.MANUFCO	g	0.00	7	7973	3348	.43	.42	.01-
N	.960	.890	READY MIX CONCRETE	11.2	0.00	2	20000	18600	.93	.93	-
	.640	.410	NAYZAK OIES & MOULDS	g	0.00	1	100	45	.47	.45	.02-
	.820	.710	JORDAN STEEL	34.4	6.58	3	1900	1435	.75	.76	.01+
	.730	.580	MIDEAST PHARM. 75%	E	0.00	4	6800	2584	.63	.63	-
	1.190	.860	UNION TOBACCO 75%	g	0.00	10	9750	8822	1.16	1.16	-
	.730	.550	RAZI PHARM. 85%	E	0.00	7	12000	6240	.67	.67	-
	.570	.290	INDS. ENG.	g	0.00	1	500	150	.30	.30	-
	.820	.590	NATL. POULTRY	E	0.00	4	1000	668	.65	.67	.02+
N	1.000	.690	NAT.ALUMINIUM. 75%	97.4	0.00	6	3350	1508	.70	.70	-
	.860	.580	MID.EAST COMPLEX	7.6	16.13	6	6150	3754	.61	.62	.01+
	GRAND TOTAL					144	213083	117430			

↑ : New 12 months high
↓ : New 12 months low
N : Listed during the past 12 months
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more
g : Negative P/E
E : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

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French clubs make perfect start in UEFA Cup

Liverpool, Celtic draw, Inter win

PARIS (AFP) — French teams stole the limelight as the UEFA Cup kicked-off on Tuesday with all seven sides engaged in the competition either winning or drawing their first-leg first-round matches.

Auxerre produced one of the best results of the evening when they came away from Deportivo La Coruna in Spain 2-1 winners. Metz scored a 2-0 win away to Belgian side Mouscron. And Nantes forced a 2-2 draw away against Denmark's Aarhus.

French clubs playing at home could also feel satisfied. Bastia snatched a 1-0 win over Portuguese giants Benfica. Lyoo hammered visiting Brondy of Denmark 4-1. Bordeaux shared a 0-0 draw with excellent English opponents Aston Villa. And Strasbourg, reduced to ten men when Pascal Noumd was sent off late in the second half, defeated Glasgow Rangers 2-1 in a match in which all the goals came from penalties.

Italian sides had mixed fortunes. Inter Milan snatched a 2-0 home victory over Swiss opponents Neuchatel but Sampdoria left things too late and crashed to visiting Athletic Bilbao 2-1. Lazio produced a super second-half display to come away 4-0 winoers from Vitoria Guimaraes in Portugal but Udinese were beat 1-0 in Poland by Widzew Lodz.

British clubs, like Aston Villa and Rangers, limited the away-leg damage. Arsenal went down 1-0 in Greece to PAOK Salonika and plucky Leicester City gave Atletico a fright in Madrid before being beaten 2-1.

Meanwhile Celtic and Liverpool shared one of the best matches of the round when they played out a 2-2 draw in Glasgow.

Among other matches, 1860 Munich of Germany were 1-0 winners at Pori in Finland. Dutch giants Ajax struggled for a 1-1 draw away to Marihor Teatanic in Slovenia, and Turkey's Trahzonspor beat visiting German opponents Bochum 2-0.

The higgest score of the night came from Zagreb, where Croatia Zagreb were held 4-4 by Switzerland's Grasshopper Zurich.

And in Salzburg the local Austrian side snatched a thrilling 4-3 win over Anderlecht of Belgium.

Auxerre's win was sealed by two goals in a twelve minute blitz late in the second-half — Bernard Diomede finding the net in the 72nd minute and Stephane Guivarc'h making it 2-0 six minutes from the final whistle.

Not that manager Guy Roux was totally happy since Deportivo managed to pull one back through Brazilian Djalminha with three minutes left to play.

"It was a good result — apart from the late goal," he said, adding: "Against a team of Deportivo's quality you can take nothing for granted and we shall have to be very alert and careful in the return.

Two first-half goals from Frederic Meyrieu and Bruno Rodriguez destroyed Belgian confidence and gave depleted Metz a 2-0 win at Mouscron.

Internazionale Milan's Brazilian striker Ronaldo (L) runs for the ball during first round first leg UEFA Cup match Internazionale Milan vs Neuchatel at Meazza stadium Milan (Reuters phnto)

Metz, without international striker Robert Pires who is oursing a broken toe, closed up shop after the interval — Lionel Letizi making several spectacular saves in the visitor's goal and Pascal Pierre clearing a beader from home striker Frederic Pierre off the line.

Nantes were less pleased with their 2-2 result in Denmark since they had half-a-dozeh chances to win the match outright after taking a 2-1 lead in the 24th minute.

Defensive careless in the last quarter-of-an-hour cost the French side dearly since the Danes were able to equalise through Hallum.

Brazil's Olympic team came to Inter Milan's rescue and second-half goals from Ronaldo and Ze Elias earned them their 2-0 win over Neuchatel.

Inter, the losing finalists last season, faced the prospect of an embarassing home draw after failing to break down the Swiss defence in the first half despite some marvellous efforts from the 20-year-old Ronaldo who loosed off a ferocious 25-yard free-kick which Joel Corminboeuf just managed to puncb out, and had a close range effort blocked by the Swiss goalkeeper.

Ronaldo finally broke the deadlock in the 58th minute, scoring his second goal in as many games for his new club after fine work by his Olympic team-mate from the Atlanta Games.

Ze Elias ghosted past two defenders on the right-hand side of the area and fired in a potent close-range shot which Corminboeuf palmed across the face of his goal.

Ronaldo then finished the job, swooping in unmarked at the far post — his reflex shot hitting the underside of the bar and ricocheting into the back of the net.

The first man to congratulate the goalscorer was veteran Inter defender Giuseppe Bergomi, who was celebrating his 100th European cup tie.

Ze Elias added the second in the 71st minute, his rasping shot from just outside the area taking a wicked deflection off defender Lionel Martin and leaving Corminboueuf no chance as it flew into the corner.

Polish champions Widzew Lodz beat Udinese 1-0 in a controversial encounter. Defender Daniel Bogusz drove home the second-half winner as Lodz, who were dumped out of the Champions League qualifiers last month by Parma, took their revenge on Italian football.

However, there was controversy over a disputed penalty claim by the Italians after they had seized the early initiative. Oliver Bierhoff, whose two goals clinched the 1996 European championships for Germany, came close with a header and then burst through but sent his shot high under a defencive challenge.

Bierhoff, who was wearing the captain's armband, then split the Lodz defence with a through-hall. Amoroso ran down the middle unchallenged but tumbled over as he guided the ball past goalkeeper Arkadiusz Ooyszko.

Instead of earning the penalty he had been expecting, the Brazilian striker was promptly booked by the referee for 'faking' a dive and the Poles were awarded a free-kick.

Lodz piled oo the pressure after the re-start and a series of shots rained down on Luigi Turci's goal before Andrzej Kobylanski met Miroslaw Szymkowiak's cross with a fine header which hit the near post.

Udinese, who have waited a 100 years to play a European cup game, responded with a harrelling drive from new Belgian signing Johan Walem.

However, the breakthrough wasn't long in coming. In the 63rd minute, the ball bounced loose in a packed penalty area and Bogusz drove it home waist-high, on the volley from 18 yards.

Atletico Madrid's Brazilian star Juninho gained some revenge over English Premiership Leicester City when he scored one of the goals in his side's 2-1 win. Juninho, as a Middleshrough player, lost out to Leicester in last season's League Cup final. After Leicester had taken a shock 12th minute lead through Ian Marshall, the South American scored the equaliser after a mazy run. Italian star Christian Vieri then converted from the spot to give the Spaniards victory.

A stunning goal from Steve McManaman in the dying seconds earned Liverpool a 2-2 draw against Celtic in a pulsating encounter.

Celtic had battled back from a goal down and appeared to have secured a dramatic win before McManaman rounded off a sensational run from inside his own half with a curling 20-yard shot inside the post.

Liverpool had threatened to run away with the first leg of the UEFA Cup first round clash after taking a sixth minute lead through 17-year-old goal sensation Michael Owen.

The English visitors dominated the first half and should have put the tie out of Celtic's reach before the Scottish giants hit back in a dramatic fashion with Jackie McNamara scoring a 53rd minute equaliser. Parkhead exploded in wild celebrations 10 minutes later when Simon Donnelly slottged home a penalty.

But McManaman's wonder goal silenced the raucous home supporters, providing a fittingly dramatic end to a night of nerve-jangling excitement. He set off oo his 60-yard run before slamming the hall into the net.

Greek first division side Salonika beat Premiership giants Arsenal 1-0 — midfielder Konstantinos Fratzescos, who had earlier forced Arsenal keeper David Seaman into a fingertip save from a freekick, scoring the decisive goal on the hour.

Arsenal, clearly suffering without Dutch inspiration Dennis Bergkamp who was did oot travel as he is frightened of flying, forced only one real chance which was squandered by record scorer

Ian Wright, one of three Arseoal players booked, in the 50th minute.

A last-minute goal by Ghanaian star Abedi Pele gave Germany's 1860 Munich a useful 1-0 win away to Jazz Pori in Finland.

Pele, who starred for Marseille in their 1993 European Cup final triumph, slipped through a ruck of defenders before rifling home a left-footed shot from the edge of the area.

"It was difficult out there tonight, oot one of our best matches. But it's a very good result for us," said Pele.

Coach Werner Lorant said: "We were patient and that paid off for us, but we mustn't be complacent with the second leg to come.

Karlsruhe, semi-finalists in 1994, meanwhile struggled embarrassingly before edging Famagusta of Cyprus 2-1.

David Regis headed the Germans ahead in the 12th minute following a corner on the left but Pambos Charambalous blasted home a superb freekick oo 35 minutes for a shock equaliser.

In the second half, the Germans huffed and puffed as the crowd grew increasingly frustrated uotil Freochman Marc Keller whipped in a tantalising cross from the right which Markus Roth despatched with a fine header.

FC Schalke's Michael Goossens (R) scores fnr Schalke 04 as Hadjuk Split's goalkeeper Tonci Gabrig (2L) looks nn in vain during their first leg, first round match in the UEFA Cup. FC Schalke is the defending UEFA Cup champinns (Reuters phnto)

Sozos Yianniaki (L) and goalie Nicos Ranayiotou of Cypress soccer club Anosthosis Farmagusta react after Markus Schroth of Karlsruhe scored during their UEFA Cup first round match. Karlsruhe won the match 2-1 (Reuters photo)

Slaney cleared by American Federation

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) — The American athletics Federation cleared former dual world champion Mary Decker-Slaney here on Tuesday of cbarges that she tested positive for drugs at the American Olympic trials last year.

The 38-year-old Slaney, who won gold at both 1500 and 3000m in the 1983 World championships, admined that her testosterone to epitestosterone ratio in the test performed at the U.S. Olympic trials was higher than the permitted 6 to 1 ratio, but she said that was due to normal hormonal fluctuations.

The three woman committee, which met to discuss her case, agreed with her and concluded that Slaney, who had missed the World Championship Trials after the charges were made and had been subject to a ban imposed by the International Amateur Athletic Federation in May, had not 'broken the doping regulations last year'.

"Mary Slaney has been one of our greatest athletes and I look forward to seeing her run again," Craig Masback, the newly installed head of the American Federation, said.

The commission did oot realease any details of their discussions on Slaney, who had shown she was still in top form by taking silver in the world indoor 1500 metres in March, and did not reveal if they had reviewed the cases of the other two American athletes implicated in the charges Sandra Farmer-Patrick and Stephen Flenoy.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Maradona will quit if dad desires

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Diego Maradona said that he would give up football if his father asks him to do so. Maradona, dogged by positive drug test reports that jeopardized his twilight career, spoke duriog television coverage of a match here. The veteran has protested publicly over anti-doping test controls. Until a receot reinstatement his playing status was in jeopardy. Maradona tested positive and was removed from the 1994 Argentine World Cup team.

De La Hoya lines up 2 title fights

LAS VEGAS (AFP) — Unbeaten Oscar de la Hoya, who retained his World Boxing Council (WBC) welterweight title at the weekend by unanimously outpointing Hector Camacho, will make a voluntary defence of his crown in Atlantic City on December 6 against Wilfredo Rivera of Puerto Rico before facing official contender Patric Charpentier of France in Tokyo in March.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

YOU BE THE JUDGE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ J 10 7 5
♡ 9 8 2
◇ K 7 3
♣ K 9 4

WEST
♠ 8 3
♡ K Q J 8
◇ Q 10 8 4
♣ Q 8 3

EAST
♠ 6 4
♡ A 7 5 4
◇ 9 8 5
♣ 10 7 6 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 9 8
♡ 10 8
◇ A J 2
♣ A J 5

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
4♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: King of ♡

Follow the bidding and play of this hand. Did anyone err? If so, who and how?

The auction was textbook. North had a clear raise to two spades and that was not enough to get South interested in anything more than game, which was reached with the minimum fuss.

The defense started with three rounds of hearts, declarer ruffing the third. Trumps were drawn in two rounds, ending in dummy. It all seems simple enough. Declarer needs one of the two minor-suit finesses to work and the contract is home. The king of diamonds was cashed, followed by a diamond to the jack. That lost and a diamond was returned. Declarer tried the club finesse next, but had no better luck. Down one.

It might seem like a perfectly normal result, but declarer overlooked the power of the nine of clubs in dummy. No finesse need be taken after trumps are drawn, and declarer can develop two extra chances.

First, the ace and king of diamonds should be cashed, in an attempt to drop the queen. Should that happen, you are playing for overtricks. When her majesty fails to appear, simply exit with a diamond. As the cards lie, West has the queen and is endplayed.

For the sake of argument, though, let's suppose that it is East who wins the queen. East must return a club and declarer still has two finesses available, both in clubs. Declarer plays low from hand and, if the clubs are as in the diagram, West is forced to go up with the queen and that's that. Interchange queen and ten, and West's ten will force the king. But declarer still has a straight finesse for the queen to land the contract.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144
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Val Kilmer & Elizabeth Shue..in
THE SAINT
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"
Alyssa Milano & William Petersen..in
FEAR
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA
DON JOHNSON.. IN
GUILTY AS SIN
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD
CONCORD "1"
Sandra Bullock & Samuel L. Jackson...in
A TIME TO KILL
(12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30)
CONCORD "2"
BATMAN & ROBIN
Shows: 3:30, 5:45 only

CINMA ABDOUN
GALLERIA 1
ABDOUN
John Travolta & Nicolas Cage In
Face Off
Shows: 10:30, 8:30, 6:30

CINMA ABDOUN
GALLERIA 2
ABDOUN
Julia Roberts ... In
MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING
Shows: 10:30, 8:30, 6:30

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Asian Basketball Championship

Jordan loses to UAE, plays for 7-8th places Friday

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JORDAN'S MEN'S national haskethall team Wednesday lost 79-69 to the United Arab Emirates and will now play for 7-8th places at the 19th Asian Basketball Championship currently underway in Riyadh, Saudi Arahia, with 15 teams taking part.

Jordan bad lost 95-62 to five-time titleholders China and 71-59 to Saudi Arabi in secood round matches thus losing their cbance of advancing tn the semifinals to which the top two teams from each of the two secood round groups will qualify.

Group A iocludes China, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arahia, Jordan.

Group B includes Iran, South Korea, Japan, Chinese Taipei.

Jordan Baskethall Federation officials were neverthless content with the team's qualificatioo to the second round regarding it a positive result taking into account the inadequate preparation for the event in which Jordan last took part in 1995 with the junior team and came io 13th.

Jordan had qualified to the second round of the competition after beating Indooesia 71-49 and Kazakhstan 66-65 to qualify. They lost 68-60 to Chinese Taipei.

Only the top twn teams in eacb of the preliminary four groups moved to the second round.

China and Iran qualified from Group A which also included the Philippines and Bahrain.

South Korea and the United Arab Emirates qualified from Group B which also included India and Bangladesh.

Japan and Saudi Arabia qualified from Group C whicb included Hong Koog.

Jordan and Chioese Taipei qualified from Group D which also included Indonesia and Kazakhstan.

Bahrain, Bangladesh, Hong Koog, Indonesia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Kazakhstan are playing for 9-15th places.

The national team's best performance was a gold medal win at the 1985 Pan-Arab Games in Morocco. On the Asian level, the under-18 team woo the bronze medal at the 1995 Asian Junior Championship eoahling the team to becnme the first Jordanian team to qualify to a World Championship.

Williams counter Senna crash claim

IMOLA (AFP) — Lawyers representing Frank Williams moved to counter claims oo Tuesday that a mechanical failure caused Ayrton Senna's fatal crash here at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix.

Tbe trial into Senna's fatal accideot re-opened with the Brazilian's steering column in his Williams car once again in the spotligbt.

State prosecutor Maurizio Passarini claims that Senna's modified column failed as the triple world champion took the Tamhurello curve, sending his car into a coocrete wall at high speed.

Italian ex-Formula One driver Michele Alboreto told Imnla magistraie Antonin Costanzo on Tuesday: "On that bend, you don't go off unless there's a mechanical failure."

The former Ferrari driver said that the stresses and strains on the steering column at a circuit like Imola meant there would be some flexing — "of the order of a few millimetres, two or three."

Alboreto, called to testify hy Passarini, told reporters afterwards: "Having seen the pictures from Senna's car, I'm eveo more convinced that it was a technical problem which caused the crash.

"There's videotape which shows the (flexing) movement of the steering wbeel was two or three centimetres. If this film is accepted as evidence in court, it will prove that something was wrong with Senna's car.

"No steering wheel moves a few centimetres."

Six men face manslaughter charges after the tragedy here — team owner Williams, technical director Patrick Head and chief designer Adrian Newey, along with three race officials.

Williams lawyers later sought to counter Alhoreto's claim, producing a film made in a laboratory using a 1994 car taken from the team's Formula One museum.

The film, which has a driver at the wheel simulating the same movements as those made during a race, according to the defence, indicates that the steering wheel did move several centimetres in oormal circumstances.

Hnwever, the film did oot impress the state prosecutor.

"The film shown today has the same value as the defendant who says 'I waso't in that place oo that nigbt'," said Passarini. "It remains the commeot of a defeodant."

The three officials — Federico Bendinelli, head of the Sagis company who manage the Imola circuit, clerk of the course Giorgio Poggi and Roland Bruynseraede, theo the race delegate of the sport's ruling International Automobile Federatioo — are all due to appear in court nn September 23.

Williams, Head and Newey are due here on October 3.

All six deoy the charges, the first ever to be levelled against a Formula One team, and whicb carry a maximum senteoce of five years.

Seles wins, Rubin out in Princess Cup

TOKYO (AFP) — Former World No. 1 Monica Seles hrushed aside Tamarine Tanasugarn of Thailand in straight sets in the $450,000 Princess Cup bere Wednesday.

The top-seeded American, seeking to soften her U.S. Open disappointment, powered her way through to the quarter-finals with a 6-1, 6-4 victory.

Rain interrupted play on the Ariake Coliseum ceotre court for several minutes with Seles leading 6-1 and 0-1.

When the match was resumed, the 20-year-old Los Angeles-born Thai player fought hack to 4-4 despite strong winds, artacking short halls off the American.

"I think she started playing better, she was missing less, and I lost my coocentration a couple of times. But the whole match was really tough to get your timing, because it was very windy," said Seles.

"I felt a little hit uncomfortable with the surroundings, because I hadn't hit the hall for the last two days and today, I only hit for a half an hour in the stadium.

"So I just tried to play very safe today," added Seles.

The American scored a crucial break in the ninth game after repeating deuces four times and then hit a cross-court winner oo her third match point to close the matcb in 65 minutes.

Chanda Rubin

Patty Schnyder of Switzerland and Henrieta Nagyova of Slovakia became the first seeded players to fall on the outside courts in the first rouod.

Seventh seed Schnyder bowed to qualifier Maria-Alejandra Vento of Venezuela 4-6, 0-6. The ninth seed Nagyova slumped after taking the first five games in a row to go down 6-2, 4-6, 1-6 to Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan.

Another qualifier, Shioobu Asagoe, ranked 259 in the wnrld, pulled off ber higgest win wheo she stunned American Chanda Ruhin, the world number 30, 6-4, 6-3 to the delight of fans.

"To win my first match was my higgest target in this tournameot, because all the players here are professional," said Asagoe, 21, who turned professiooal in February.

"I learned a lot today. I felt comfortable wheo I was playing with the wind on my back. I was able to hit hack on her serve... I think it was the key to my victory," she added.

RACJ organises National Rally Friday

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Al Tayihat Village National Rally kicks off Friday with 15 local auto sports competitors taking part.

The participating cars will cover a total of 119.68 kilometres in three special stages.

The first stage takes drivers south reaching Daha'a area where the first special stage totals a distance of 10.2 kilometres. The secood stage is in Salaytah covering a distance of 32.23 kilometres and the final stage is Al Mdesisat with a distance of 17.41 kilometres.

The drivers will then return passing through the three stages on their way back.

Untill press time Wednesday, only teo cars had passed the technical test and six cars were given the chance uotil Friday morning to prepare their cars in what coocerns safety matters.

Competinoo will he beated herween Mohammad Dawood who leads the Jordan's Drivers Open Championship with 96 poiots and second placed Ibrahim Ata Ali with 88.5 .

Last year's Jordan Opeo champioo Ahmad Dawoud who missed most of the season after suffering a broken leg in the preparations for the Jordan International Rally last May is finally fit to take part in the competition .

Ata Ali will try his best to win the rally and squeeze the knot on Mohammad Dawood.

After taking part in the Rumman Hill Climh and other speed rallies, Tala Shawa and co-driver Nansi Al Majali are the only women participants in this year's national event.

The last female participant in a national rally was Malia Asfour in 1989.

Mohammad Al Anani who will take part in the most powerful car in the event Lancia Delta Integral will be competing in his first desert rally.

List of competitors:

1-Ahmad Dawoud	Ford Escort Cosworth 4x4
2-Mohammad Dawoud	Ford Escort Cosworth 4x4
3- Ma'rouf Abu Samrah	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4
4- Ibrahim Ata Ali	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4
5- Faris Bustami	Toyota Celica Turbo
6- Bishara Qaza'ar	Peugeot 205 GTI
7- Ibrahim Mohawesh	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4
8- Alfred Shamoun	Seat Ibiza SXI
9- Mohammad Al Ma'ani	Lancia Delta Integral 4x4
10- Assem Aref	Volvo 244
11- Tala Shawa	Ford Fiesta XR2I
12- Ahmad Mehyar	Mazda 323 4x4
13- Toni Khlasi	Ford Fiesta X$21
14- Zied Talhami	Ford Fiesta XR2I
15- Mohammad Balbaki	Ford Fiesta XR2I

Hill dumped by Arrows

ZELTWEG, Austria (AFP) — Defeoding world champion Damon Hill has been dumped hy Arrows — 24 hours before his 37th hirthday.

His place next season will be taken hy Finland's Miko Salo, who is at preseot with the Tyrrell team.

Annoucing the decision to part with Hill, Arrows boss Toni Walkinshaw thanked the Englishman for his help this season here oo Wednesday.

"We looked very carefully at all the options and, after discussing the matter with our technical partners and sponsors realised that Mika would be the most appropriate driver for us.

"We have had a learning year in many ways and I am sure the undouhted taleots of both Mika and Pedro will provide the perfect partnership to take us forward.

"I want to thank Damoo Hill for all his cootrihuoions to the team this year. It has beeo invaluable to have the world champioo driving for us and I wasot to wish him the best of luck for the future."

Hill is oow likely to sign with either Prost or Jordan.

The world champion was left as the man in demand when Jordan lost their legal battle to retain Giancarlo Fisichella and Jean Alesi made the switch to Sauber on Tuesday.

Even if Jordan decide to appeal against the High Court decision which left Fisichella beading for Beoetton, the Silverstooe-hased team's chances appear to be slim.

But Jordan are oow likely to turn their attentions to Hill with their main backers, Benson and Hedges, understood to be keen on having the high-profile Englishman on board for 1998.

The presence of Hill would undouhtedly boost the ambitious outfit's profile while his undisputed expertise in technical feedhack could be an important factor as they link-up with oew engine partners Mugen-Honda next year.

The only sticking point could be the fee with Hill having reportedly agreed a 5million pounds deal with the team headed hy four-time former world champion Alain Prost, but nothing official has been announced yet.

Hill is clearly in a strong posinon with no other driver of his calibre, experience — or with his winning records — on the market following Alesi's decisinn to quit Benetton to sign a 6million pound two-year deal with Sauber.

Gerhard Berger is theoretically still a possible target

Austrian novelty test for GP racers

ZELTWEG, Austria (AFP) — Michael Scbumacher and Jacques Villeneuve, battling for the 1997 Drivers' World Cbampionship, face a circuit new to the series wheo Formula One returns to Austria this weekend for the first time in a decade.

With four races to go, and Austria the first of douhle-header preceding the Luxembourg Grand Prix at Germany's Nurburgring track a week away, Schumacher has a 10 point lead in the drivers' race, with his Ferrari team just one poiot ahead of Villeneuve's Williams Renault.

The super-fast Osterreichring circuit at Zeltweg has been drastically re-designed to meet the latest safety requirements. The last race in 1987 was started three times, after two spectacular pile-ups on the then very narrow starting straight.

The track now is slower, shorter, rigbter and safer, and has also been renamed the A-1 Riog at Speilberg, to reflect the new circuit's sponsor and a slightly nearer township in the rolling countryside of the Styria region.

Because it is the first Grand Prix at the new track, action starts on Thursday with two extra hours of practice, 12.00 to 13.00 and 14.00 to 15.00, ahead of the normal Friday schedule.

Villeneuve and Williams Renault are among the handful of Grand Prix outfits that have tested privately at the A-1 Rjng. Schumacher and Ferrari have not, hut the German douhle champion does not see that as a problem.

"For most drivers," Schumacher said, "the A-1 Ring is a new circuit, hut it should not be a prohlem to adapt to the track within a couple of laps, if the basic set-up of the cars works well."

Villeneuve described the track as "like Monaco without the barriers, very tight and very hard to overtake. Qualifying will be very important."

Damon Hill was more direct.

"I have to admit I didn't like the circuit very much. It didn't seem io have any appealing features. From what I heard, the new circuit is a disappointment compared to wbat it used in be," the English world champioo said.

He described it as a "stop and go circuit" and from the viewpoint of his Arrows Yamaha team, be added: "Unfortunately for us, I think it will beoefit the teams with more horsepower."

That includes Ferrari and McLaren Mercedes, nn a high after David Coulthard's impressive win, and Mika Hakkinen's outstanding speed, in Italy two weeks ago. Both have the added advantage of having tested here.

Jordan Peugeot, another team with a powerful eogine, also has the basic track data in its computers, although only test driver Fabrizio de Simooe drove at Zeltweg, and regular drivers Giancarlo Fisicbella and Ralf Schumacher are among those who will have to learn the circuit oo Thursday.

"It's a strange circuit oo our simulatioo," said technical chief Gary Anderson, "because it seems the amount of downforce you run does not affect the lap time — you go faster round corners and slower on the straights."

Autumn is coming fast in the region, with morning temperatures down to one degree centigrade, although rising to 18 degrees by midday. When Williams tested here a year ago, there was already snow on nearhy mountains.

Schumacher's teammate Eddie Irvine hoped it would stay cold.

"Cold weather will help us a lot, because we have no problem getting our tyres up to temperature, as other teams have," Irvine said.

He has never eveo visited Austria, but is looking forward to the race "because in theory, our car should be much better than it was in Monza."

Ferrari's Sporting Director Jean Todt acknowledged how important the race would be for the championship battles.

"We will have to be fighting at the front," the Frenchman said.

"On this circuit we should not need to play a defensive game, as we did in Monza," he added. "Instead, we will be attacking."

Omega timekeeper and data handler in Pan-Arab Games '97 in Beirut

OMEGA'S experience in measuring, recording and timekeeping of sports is unmatched by any other leading watch brand. Omega was the first official timekeeper of the 1932 Olympic Games and has continued this tradition throughout the 21 past Olympic Games since then, including the latest held in Atlanta, USA. in 1996. Recently, Omega was assigned to handle the data and be the timekeeper of the soccer plus the track and field disciplines during the Eighth Pan-Arab Games that took place at the renovated "Camille Chamoun" Sports City in Beirut between July 12th and 27th, '97. Omega will soon be celebrating its 150th Anniversary. Omega's ambassador Michael Schumacher, World Champion Formula 1 driver, reflects the dynamism of the Omega brand and its appeal to a new generation of entrepreneurs in search of a sports watch with character and good looks.

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NOTICE TO ALL CANADIANS

RECRUITMENT TO CANADIAN FOREIGN SERVICE AND THE CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CIDA)

The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Citizenship and Immigration and CIDA will be recruiting officers. Examinations will take place Saturday October 25, 1997, Qualified Canadians may apply at the Embassy before October 6 1997, (For info: 666 124).

AVIS AUX CANADIENS

RECRUTEMENT POUR LE MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES ET DU COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL ET L'AGENCE CANADIENNE POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT INTERNATIONAL (ACDI)

Le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Commerce International canadien, Citoyenneté et Immigration ainsi que l'ACDI recruteront de nouveaux agents, L'examen aura lieu le samedi 25 octobre 1997. Les Canadiens qualifiés peuvent s'inscrire à l'Ambassade jusqu'au 6 octobre 1997. (Pour info: 666-124)

HOW TO FLOAT WITH NO BOAT: Freshwater angler Petah Woollams, wearing flippers, heads towards the water as she prepares to use a "Fish'N'Tube" on Lake Pupuke on Tuesday. The inflatable floating fishing aid increases the manoeuvrability of serious fishermen to get off the beach without using a boat (Reuters photo)

Northern Irish unionists inching towards meeting with Sinn Fein

BELFAST (AFP) — The damage done to the Northern Ireland peace process by a republican bomb attack was under repair Wednesday after unionists moderated their earlier boycott of peace talks.

The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the largest party of the province's Protestant majority, said it would go ahead with a meeting with the moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).

They were to be joined by two smaller unionist parties, the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP).

But all were insisting that they would still not sit down at the same table with Sinn Fein, who are taking part in the main session of the peace talks in the same building, at Stormont outside Belfast.

But observers welcomed signs that the unionists were inching slowly towards the main session.

The meeting with the SDLP was likely to be less significant than the fact that it went ahead at all, a day after a 180-kilogramme bomb blamed on a republican splinter group devastated the centre of the border town of Markethill.

The bomb left a five-metre crater and caused widespread damage but no injuries.

The decision to meet the nationalist SDLP in a peripheral meeting — under the same roof, although not in the same room where the main peace talks are being held — will have sent a symbolic message to the bombers that the peace process continues.

A spokesman for the Northern Ireland office called the unionists' gesture a "very positive sign."

British Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam said they had shown "great courage" in going ahead with the meeting.

Irish Foreign Affairs Minister Ray Burke added: "They have seen the long term opportunities rather than the short term problems that have been created by that bomb."

Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein — the IRA's political wing — urged the unionists to put their suspicions about his party behind them and join the full talks:

"They are very welcome. I hope Mr. Trimble has the courage to come into the room and get down to the real job of building a lasting settlement."

Tuesday's attack, which security sources blame on the republican splinter group the Continuity Army Council (CAC), initially prompted the UUP to announce they would be extending their boycott of the Stormont peace negotiations, which started Monday, and demand Sinn Fein's expulsion.

UUP leader David Trimble refused to accept an IRA denial of responsibility and said the circumstances of the attack — its location, method and the van used — were almost identical to an IRA attack on Markethill six years ago, giving "prima facie" evidence of their involvement.

Suspicions that the CAC is run by a number of ex-IRA members and operates with the IRA's blessing have abounded for some time and last week an IRA statement said the organisation had problems with surrendering its weapons prior to a political agreement.

Such events led Mr. Trimble to the conclusion that the IRA, if not violating its ceasefire, was not committed to exclusively peaceful methods.

As a condition of participation in peace talks, such a lack of commitment required its political representative Sinn Fein be expelled, he said.

"There is a gut feeling on the ground that the IRA is involved," said Mr. Trimble. "There has to be a response in terms of the talks."

A wasp lands onto the nose of Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams as he enters the Stormont peace talks Wednesday. Mr. Adams expressed regret over yesterday's bomb attack in Markethill, adding that the unionists were using this as an excuse not to participate in the talks (Reuters photo)

UDP spokesman Gary McMichael added the bomb-making skills used were "quite clearly those which originate within the IRA" and called on IRA to "police" other republican groups in areas such as Markethill which it was known to control.

A spokesman for the Northern Ireland office confirmed the bomb attack would dominate any discussions Wednesday between Mr. Mowlam and Sinn Fein.

All five unionist parties have stayed out of the round-table talks at Stormont on the future of the province held in protest at Sinn Fein's inclusion.

Sinn Fein were allowed to join after their military wing the IRA declared a ceasefire on July 20, but unionists remain suspicious of the IRA's intention to disarm or keep its ceasefire.

At the discussions Wednesday Sinn Fein and UUP delegates were expected to come face to face for the first time in years, only for the UUP to make a formal representation backing its call that Sinn Fein be expelled.

The CAC broke away from the IRA in recent years in protest at the IRA's willingness to consider a ceasefire.

Diana bodyguard could explain crash on Friday

PARIS (AFP) — Bodyguard Trevor Rees-Jones, the one man who could shed light on exactly how Princess Diana died, is to be questioned by investigators Friday for the first time, informed sources said Wednesday.

While experts caution that Mr. Rees-Jones could have suffered a memory block about the Aug. 31 crash, the judges will be keen to question him about the role of paparazzi photographers in the accident.

The state of intoxication of the driver, Henri Paul, will also be high in their list of questions, while he may also be able to elucidate a theory that the Mercedes S-280 limousine hit another car — apparently a Fiat — just before veering out of control in the Alma Bridge underpass by the Seine.

The 29-year-old former paratrooper will be quizzed by examining magistrates Marie-Christine Devidal and Herve Stephan at the Pitie-Salpetriere Hospital, where he has regained full consciousness two weeks after the tragedy.

The crash killed Diana, her boyfriend Dodi Fayed and their driver Henri Paul, who has subsequently been found to have been under the influence of a cocktail of drinks and anti-depressant medicines.

Hospital sources said Tuesday that Mr. Rees-Jones, a bodyguard for the Fayed family who was the only person in the crash car wearing a seatbelt, was "conscious and can talk."

Mr. Rees-Jones suffered severe facial injuries and has been in intensive care after undergoing 10 hours of surgery to rebuild his lower face days after the crash.

Some reports indicate, however, that he may have suffered partial or total amnesia and never be able to tell police exactly what happened in the moments before the crash.

The RTL radio station reported Wednesday that Mr. Rees-Jones "remembers nothing," although it was not ruled out that his memory would return in coming days. "In such cases the memory can come back progressively, but often the memory of the accident never comes back," said expert Jean Patel.

Another medical source told Agence France Presse that Mr. Rees-Jones' recall of the accident comes and goes.

"Given the violence of the shock and the injuries he could have moments of amnesia but that can disappear sometimes from one day to the other or even in the space of a few hours," he said.

Meanwhile, reliable sources confirmed police were hunting for a Fiat car which might have been hit by the Mercedes shortly before the limousine went out of control.

While stressing that the possibility of such a collision was "tiny," the sources said laboratory tests on debris found at the scene of the accident had established the make of a car which could have been involved.

France 2 Television Tuesday cited a witness statement suggesting a collision shortly before the crash, and said evidence had been found at the scene indicating the Mercedes shunted another car just before the accident.

In particular, police were investigating fragments of indicator light casings and a rear-view mirror from the Mercedes found some distance before the point of impact in the Alma Bridge tunnel beside the Seine, it said.

These could suggest the front of the Mercedes, reportedly travelling at up to 200 kilometres per hour, had hit the rear of another vehicle going much more slowly, it pointed out.

Attention was also focused on traces of paint found on the right front panel of the Mercedes, and a rear-view mirror ripped off the Mercedes and also found some distance before the scene of the crash.

Both of these would also be consistent with hitting a vehicle from behind, or possibly glancing off its side while overtaking into the fast lane of the dual-carriageway underpass.

Saudi talks to U.S. on extraditing dissident

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia is discussing with U.S. authorities the extradition of a Saudi dissident linked to a 1996 bombing in the kingdom, Defence Minister Prince Sultan was Wednesday quoted as saying.

"The issue of extraditing [Hani] Al Sayegh to Saudi authorities is under discussion... between the Saudi Interior Ministry and the American Justice Department as well as the intelligence services of both countries," Prince Sultan said.

His comments during a visit to Spain were carried by the Saudi-owned Asharq Al Awsat newspaper.

Prince Sultan said the Saudi investigation continued "wisely and objectively" into the bombing which killed 19 U.S. servicemen in the eastern town of Khobar in June 1996.

Sayegh was deported to the U.S. from Canada in June. Canadian court documents identified him as the driver of a car that gave an explosives-laden fuel truck a go-ahead signal to carry out the bombing.

The official Saudi press agency reported last week that Saudi Arabia, through its Ambassador to Washington Prince Bandar Ben Sultan, had asked the U.S. for Sayegh's extradition.

The U.S. Justice Department said last week that a lack of evidence would force prosecutors to drop a criminal charge against Sayegh after he disavowed a plea deal that called for him to tell what he knew about the bombing.

FBI Director Louis Freeh said last week the Federal Bureau of Investigation continued to work closely with Saudi Arabia to acquire evidence about the bombing and was receiving documents and videotapes.

But the FBI had not been able to directly question any suspect in Saudi Arabia.

Over 2 million Welsh will vote on assembly

CARDIFF (AFP) — More than 2.2 million electors will be asked to say "yes" or "no" in Thursday's referendum on establishing a 60-member Welsh assembly with lesser powers than a Scottish parliament approved last week.

The Welsh will accept or reject one proposal: "I agree that there should be a Welsh assembly" or "I do not agree that there should be a Welsh assembly." Last Thursday's Scottish referendum vote posed two questions: One on the assembly and the other on giving the assembly authority over taxes.

According to the latest opinion polls, Thursday's vote is neck and neck, but the surveys give a slight lead to the "yes" side. One third of voters are undecided.

The other main question is what will be the voter turnout after efforts by campaign organisers to mobilise the 2.9 million population for the vote.

Provided there is a "yes" victory, the assembly will be based in the Welsh capital Cardiff and will perform only executive functions. It will not have the legislative and taxing powers accorded to the Scottish Parliament.

As part of giving more democratic power to Wales, the new assembly will oversee the Welsh secretary's direction of the ($11 billion) Welsh budget.

The Welsh secretary will also defend Welsh interests before the British government, including the work of 40 Welsh members in the House of Commons.

The new assembly will be able to intervene in agriculture, education, health, and infrastructure issues, but judicial and police issues will remain under London's control.

U.S. fails to find compromise on Oslo mine treaty proposal

OSLO (AP) — The U.S. said Wednesday that it had failed in its attempts to force compromises in a proposed treaty on banning land mines.

Just minutes after the announcement by delegation head Eric Newsom, the rest of the more than 100 nations at the treaty talks in Oslo approved by acclamation a treaty draft calling for an immediate and total ban on anti-personnel mines.

The talks then adjourned for the day. They were scheduled to reconvene Thursday for a formal vote on adopting the draft. Backers hope the treaty will be signed in Ottawa in December, and said they will press to get such key powers as Russia, China and India to join the process by then.

Campaigners against land mines estimate the devices kill or maim 26,000 people a year — about 80 per cent of them civilians.

"With regret, I have to inform the conference that our strongest efforts to find a compromise solution have not been successful. This despite great efforts by the president and senior leadership of my country," Mr. Newsom told the delegates.

The announcement leaves Washington with the dilemma of either signing on to a treaty it had vigorously opposed or of risking international reproach.

Mr. Newsom added: "The U.S. delegation came to Oslo to do its utmost to negotiate a treaty text that would be sound, both from humanitarian and security standpoints."

Still, the anti-mine advocates were thrilled that the draft had been approved by the rest of the conference participants.

As the pro-treaty delegates filed out of the meeting room, they were greeted with rounds of applause and cheers from anti-mine advocates stationed outside.

"Thank you, Austria. Thank you, Canada," were among the cheers.

Jody Williams, a leader of the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines said: "We won. No, make that the world won."

Despite the euphoria, three of the world's biggest countries are not taking part in the Oslo conference: China, Russia and India.

U.S. President Bill Clinton's administration will announce its position on the draft treaty by the end of the week, U.S. delegation chief Mr. Newsom said.

The move to ban land mines has proceeded with unusual speed and pressure to conclude a treaty grew after the death of Britain's Princess Diana, who had campaigned for a ban.

The 30-minute session Wednesday was a quick defeat for the U.S., which has been at odds with other nations throughout the talks.

On Tuesday, Mr. Newsom won a 24-hour delay in the talks while Washington intensively lobbied other governments to accept the U.S.-pushed compromises.

The U.S. had sought several exceptions, including a nine-year delay in implementing the treaty and allowing countries to withdraw from the treaty if they come under attack.

The Oslo negotiations build on talks that started with a few countries in Canada 11 months ago.

The U.S. reluctantly signed on to the talks last month, demanding exceptions that activists say are contrary to the spirit of the talks. They said the idea is to ban the mines for humanitarian reasons, with no exceptions, since most victims are civilians.

The U.S. also wanted to exempt anti-personnel mines that are laid to protect anti-tank mines.

All those proposals have outraged non-governmental Groups, who insist the ban must be total and immediate to be worth anything.

"An estimated 100 million to 300 million anti-personnel mines are deployed in about 60 countries worldwide, often killing or crippling people decades after a conflict has ended.

Australian MP says all possible done short of shooting Hansen

SYDNEY (AFP) — The Australian government has done everything possible to counter the views of right-wing MP Pauline Hanson short of shooting or jailing her, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said Wednesday.

He said the Liberal Party had expelled Ms. Hanson before the 1996 federal election after she made racist remarks and the coalition government had later passed resolutions condemning her in parliament.

Addressing business leaders and academics, Mr. Downer said a continuing preoccupation with the government's response to Ms. Hanson's anti-immigration agenda led him to believe that people might be expecting an unrealistic lynch-mob approach.

"I'm not sure if the corollary of all this is that she has to be taken out and shot or jailed," said Mr. Downer. "...But we don't stamp people out in Australia."

Asked about continuing Asian perceptions that Ms. Hanson's views reflected public and government opinion, Mr. Downer said the issue had been exaggerated enormously in Australia and picked up by foreign news services.

Saddam takes a swim

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein dived into the Tigris River Tuesday to mark the beginning of a swimming tournament in Salahuddin province in northern Iraq, the official INA news agency said. "President Saddam Hussein crossed the river from the east bank to the west, returned to the east bank, and finally returned again to the west bank," INA said. "To encourage participants in this competition, the president congratulated the winners and took their pictures," it said.

Two thoroughbreds named after Diana

LONDON (AFP) — Saudi Arabian Prince Ahmed Salman has reserved the names "England's Rose" and "People's Princess" for two of his racehorses which will debut next year, the Racing Post said Wednesday. The prince's Thoroughbred Corporation reserved the names with Weatherbys naming department, which register all racehorse names, in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, who died after an August 31 car crash in Paris, the paper said. They will be given to two of his best English-based juvenile fillies next spring. Ex-jockey and racing manager Willie Carson told paper that the "prince's main priority was that they should be good horses," he said.

Clinton takes daughter out for farewell dinner

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton and the first lady took their daughter Chelsea out for a three-hour going-away dinner at an Indian restaurant two blocks from the White House. The Bombay Club is one of Chelsea's favourite restaurants. She had been there six times before Monday night's outing. It was a farewell dinner for the first daughter before she departs Thursday for Stanford University where she will be a freshman. The Clintons played host to two other couples and their children, who were schoolmates of Chelsea's at Sidwell Friends School in Washington.

Doherty to undergo psychiatric treatment

BEVERLEY HILLS (AFP) — Shannon Doherty, star of "Beverly Hills, 90210," has been ordered to undergo psychiatric treatment after breaking a student's car window with a bottle a few weeks ago. Deputy Prosecutor Ellen Aragaon said Doherty followed the student out of a restaurant either because she had had some words with him or because she mistook him for somebody else.

Architect fined over car-proof garages

GRENOBLE (AFP) — A French architects' firm was fined $8,300 for designing an underground garage which could not be reached by cars. A group of residents sued Architectes Aude, a Grenoble firm, after it proved impossible to turn right at the bottom of a ramp leading to the parking places in their new housing block. The corner at the bottom of the slope was too tight and cars could not get round it to reach the 12 places, a court agreed. "The design error is all the greater since the garages were mostly conceived for large cars," said the court.